



COMHAIRLE | CLARE
CONTAE AN CHLÁIR | COUNTY COUNCIL

TUARASCÁIL MHÍOSÚIL ÓN PHRÍOMHFHEIDHMEANNACH

MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT

Meitheamh / June
2022



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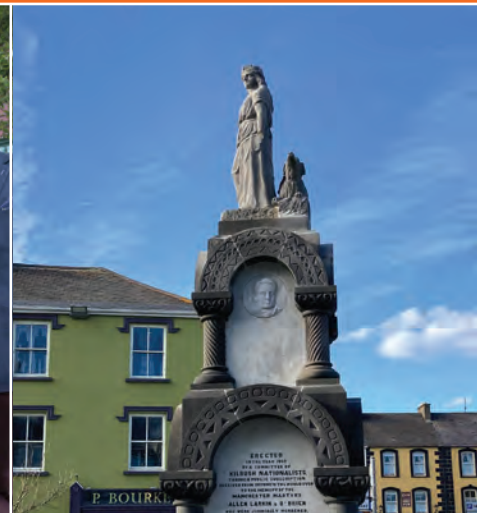
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Remembrance ceremony and unveiling of memorial sculpture for deceased children at the Clare County Nursery, Kiltrush

The Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council has unveiled a memorial sculpture in honour of the deceased children who died in the Clare County Nursery, at Old Shanakyle Graveyard.

Following a 12-month research and geophysical survey project, the Burial Grounds Unit of Clare County Council has identified a large plot in Old Shanakyle Graveyard, which contains a significant number of children's burials.

In line with the Government Action Plan for Mother and Baby Homes, Clare County Council commissioned a high-resolution ground penetrating radar survey following lengthy documentary and field research. Following the completion of this survey, it was confirmed that the plot contained burials consistent with the early 20th century burial of infants and children.

A stone sculpture, commemorating the children, was carved by Frank McCormack and the staff at Irish Natural Stone in Tubber. This was unveiled by the Cathaoirleach, Cllr PJ Ryan, at a remembrance ceremony held at the site on Tuesday, 31st May.

Speaking on behalf of the elected members of Clare County Council, Cllr Ryan said: "Every elected member of Clare County Council has requested that the Chief Executive assign the greatest priority to meeting all of the priorities of the Government Action Plan on the Mother and Baby Homes. I am delighted that, today, we have taken another step forward in meeting those obligations."

Cllr Ryan continued: "The tragedy of the County Nursery is a painful memory to recollect. But it is crucially important that we work to understand the social and administrative context of how tragedies like this happen. We must never forget what happened here in Kiltrush and across this island. The injustices faced by women and children, while going through a vulnerable experience, must never happen again."

The Chief Executive of Clare County Council, Pat Dowling, explained the reasons why he tasked the Burial Grounds Unit staff to undertake this project: "In the highly sensitive elements of memorialisation, restorative recognition, and dignified burial, upon the publication of the Commission Report, I tasked the Burial Grounds Unit of the council to undertake a comprehensive research project to identify



Michael Treacy from Miltown Malbay taking a moment to take in the new County Nursery memorial sculpture which was unveiled in Old Shanakyle Graveyard, Kiltrush, on Tuesday, 31st May, 2022.



Dr John Treacy, Burial Grounds Unit, Clare County Council; Cllr PJ Ryan, Cathaoirleach, Clare County Council; Pat Dowling, Chief Executive, Clare County Council; and Rita McCarthy, Local Historian, Kilrush, attending the remembrance ceremony and the unveiling of a sculpture for the deceased children and infants who died in the Clare County Nursery at the Old Shanakyle Graveyard in Kilrush.

and memorialise the infants and young children who died in the County Nursery while in the care of the Clare County Board of Health and Public Assistance. Today is just another step in this council's effort to accept responsibility for the unconscionable treatment of women and children in this facility, which was managed and funded by Clare County Council."

At the remembrance ceremony, the Chief Executive announced a partnership with the Department of History at the University of Limerick, whereby Clare County Council is funding a PhD Scholarship which will focus on developing greater clarity on the operation of the County Nursery during its 10 years of operation, as well as investigating the treatment of women in other Clare County Board of Health and Public Assistance facilities following the closure of the County Nursery in 1932.

The Chief Executive explained: "I have commissioned a PhD scholarship, in cooperation with our good friends at the Department of History at the University of Limerick, led by Dr David Fleming and his faculty colleagues. A recruitment

process for a suitable candidate is currently being finalised and the successful candidate will undertake a comprehensive research thesis which will analyse the administration and treatment of women at the County Nursery, other Clare Board of Health facilities and boarded out children during the 20th century. I have asked our colleague, Dr John Treacy, to assist with this process for the duration of the project, to ensure that all possible help can be given to the successful candidate in their research."

The event was concluded with a reading from John O'Donohue's 'Beannacht' by Roisin Treacy (aged 10) from Miltown Malbay and a musical reflection on concertina played by Ms Rachel Mahoney from Ennis.

The event was attended by Ms Breda Murphy of the Tuam Mother and Baby Home Alliance who noted after the event that "today was a very special day, honouring and remembering the lost lives of those who were forgotten for decades. I was honoured to attend and witness the outpouring of love and respect for both the mothers and children of the Kilrush Nursery."

FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES

CORPORATE SERVICES

Meeting with Clare Leader Forum



Council Chief Executive Pat Dowling meets with members of Clare Leader Forum to discuss the Council’s engagement processes and structures under the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.

Freedom of Information & Data Protection

2022 year to date statistics to 27/05/2022

- 46 Freedom of Information Requests
- 3 Freedom of Information Internal Review applications
- 1 Appeals to Information Commissioner
- 6 Data Access Requests – Subject Access Request
- 7 Data Access Requests – Third Party Access Request, e.g. Gardaí
- 1 Data Protection Impact Assessment.

Performance Indicators

The Performance Indicators for 2021, covering 18 topic areas, were submitted to NOAC in May, and will be published as part of the NOAC Local Authority Performance Indicators Report 2021.

The topics included 2 new test indicators introduced this year, E7: Climate Change and J5: Economic Development Spend. The data for these new indicators will not be published in the NOAC 2021 report. This is to ensure the quality of the data and identify any potential issues with the indicators.

Due to the impact of Covid-19, NOAC has predicted that the

performance in several areas will have been impacted by a range of issues such as Government restrictions in local authority offices and in planning and private rental inspections; sick leave in local authorities; the redistribution of staff to deal with Covid-19 related activities; closed libraries; collection of commercial rates, rents and mortgages.

Procurement

The following tender competitions were published publicly on eTenders in the period from 25th April to 25th May 2022, incl.:

Short description	Response deadline
Provision of consultancy services for Lisdoonvarna Heritage Plan	14/06/2022
Maigh Dara Housing Estate	09/06/2022
Design Team Consultancy Services, One Shannon Hub & Associated Public Realm	08/06/2022
Ahaclare, D’Esternes Bridge & Annagore Bridge Rehabilitation Works	25/05/2022

Event to promote gender equality and diversity in local government



An event on 17th May in Glór entitled 'Promoting Gender Equality & Diversity in Local Government' was organised by Corporate Services in collaboration with See Her Elected (SHE) and was funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

The event was opened by Noeleen Fitzgerald, Director of Finance and Support Services, who welcomed the opportunity to support initiatives that promote wider inclusivity and diversity in local decision-making structures.

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr PJ Ryan, stated that he is looking forward to seeing greater gender balance on the ballot paper and in the Council Chamber following the 2024 local elections.

A panel discussion at the event heard about the experience of Clare's current local and national elected female representatives, Cllr Ann Norton (Mayor of Ennis Municipal District), Cllr Mary Howard, Cllr Clare Colleran Molloy, Cllr Donna McGettigan, Deputy Violet-Anne Wynne TD and Senator Róisín Garvey.

Madeleine Taylor-Quinn spoke about her journey to becoming County Clare's first-ever female TD in 1981, while a panel discussion on 'Gender Quotas and Gender Diversity' included contributions from women from minority groups.



Communications

The Communications Office communicates and promotes Council activities and services and raises public awareness of issues of local and national interest.

Media releases issued during the month of May included:

- New page opens for Clare County Library project
- Mayoral Reception to honour Ennis sporting and musical achievements
- Clare event to promote gender equality and diversity in local government
- Clare Museum seeks to expand its collection
- County Clare beaches retain Blue Flag Status and Green Coast Awards for 2022.

Social Media

The Communications Office monitors and updates social media channels with creative content to enhance engagement with the public and maintain awareness of the work of the Council.

In May, the Communications Office:

- Posted 50 times on Facebook, with total followers now 16,888. The Page reach was 46,783.
- Posted 57 times on Twitter, with total followers now 7,707. Tweets earned 50,653 impressions and 2,480 engagements.
- Posted 12 times on Instagram with followers now 2,485.

Print and Graphic Design

The print and graphic design service continues to provide services including layout and production.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Work Area	Update
Recruitment	<p>The following recruitment competitions were progressed during May:</p> <p>Eligibility Exercises & Desktop Shortlisting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IS Analyst Developer (Networks) • Healthy County Co-Ordinator • Business Advisor LEO <p>Interviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Engineer • Senior Executive Technician • Supplementary Beach Lifeguard Panel • School Warden Sporadic Cover – Ennis MD • Library Assistant <p>The following competitions were advertised:</p> <p>Open Competitions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part-Time Caretaker, Ennis Leisure Facilities (John O’ Sullivan Park Lees Road, Tim Smythe Park), 2022 • Recycling Assistant, Countywide Panel, 2022 • Staff Officer Panel, 2022 • Burial Grounds Caretaker (Tulla & Killawinna) • Application Support & GIS Officer (IS Analyst Developer – analogous to Grade VI) • Executive Scientist Panel, 2022 • Temporary Assistant Engineer Panel, 2022 <p>Confined Competitions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acting Director of Services

Learning and Development	<p>Online Training programmes / Webinars / Information Sessions held in May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced Leadership • Agresso Requisitioners • Change Management • Confined Spaces Medium Risk • CPC Module 3 • Dealing with Aggressive Behaviour • Fire Warden Practical Training • First Aid Training • Grade 3 Clerical & Analogous Training • Grade 4 & Analogous Training • In House Procurement Training • Managing Difficult Conversations • MEWP Refresher • Microsoft Excel • Microsoft Word Intermediate • Pneumatic Roller Training • Pre Retirement Course • Site Dumper Assessment Training • Time Management • Water Services Briefing • Working in a Hybrid Environment • 3 Day SLG at Roadworks <p>Essential Skillz on-line Courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyber Security • Ergowize • Fire Warden • GDPR • Health & Safety Induction • Manual Handling • Working in a Covid Era <p>Climate Action Training:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Course</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Grade</th> <th style="text-align: right;">Completed /Attended</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Raising Awareness – Climate Action</td> <td>Grade 7 & Analogous</td> <td style="text-align: right;">59</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Raising Awareness – Climate Action</td> <td>Grade 6 & Analogous</td> <td style="text-align: right;">73</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Raising Awareness – Climate Action</td> <td>Grade 5 & Analogous</td> <td style="text-align: right;">43</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Raising Awareness – Climate Action</td> <td>Grade 4 & Analogous</td> <td style="text-align: right;">51</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Raising Awareness – Climate Action</td> <td>Grade 3 and Analogous</td> <td style="text-align: right;">83</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Championing Leadership</td> <td>Senior Staff & Management</td> <td style="text-align: right;">27</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Championing Leadership</td> <td>Councillors</td> <td style="text-align: right;">22</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Planners - Planning for climate Change</td> <td>Planners</td> <td style="text-align: right;">13</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Raising Awareness – Climate Action</td> <td>All Grades</td> <td style="text-align: right;">65</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Course	Grade	Completed /Attended	Raising Awareness – Climate Action	Grade 7 & Analogous	59	Raising Awareness – Climate Action	Grade 6 & Analogous	73	Raising Awareness – Climate Action	Grade 5 & Analogous	43	Raising Awareness – Climate Action	Grade 4 & Analogous	51	Raising Awareness – Climate Action	Grade 3 and Analogous	83	Championing Leadership	Senior Staff & Management	27	Championing Leadership	Councillors	22	Planners - Planning for climate Change	Planners	13	Raising Awareness – Climate Action	All Grades	65
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Employee Welfare	Employee wellbeing supports are made available to staff across a range of areas.																														
Unions	The Human Resources Department engages with Unions on various matters.																														

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

RTÉ Today show puts Clare in the national spotlight



Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr PJ Ryan, chauffeurs Dáithí Ó Sé through Bunratty Castle and Folk Park Village Street in his very own 1954 Ford Popular, complete with Clare registration plate.

The music, food and visitor attractions of County Clare made the national spotlight on Wednesday, 18th May, when RTÉ's popular *Today* show aired live from Bunratty Castle and Folk Park.

Organised in conjunction with the Tourism Department and the Clare tourism industry, the outside broadcast profiled the entire county through interviews with the Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr PJ Ryan, and a host of tourism representatives, food demonstrations by local producers and live performances by some of Clare's best-known musicians. The show got underway on RTÉ One with panoramic views of Killaloe and the surrounding countryside.

Dáithí took the TV audience on a live walking tour of Bunratty Castle and Folk Park, while also sampling butter churning, archery and meeting the wolfhounds. Nuala Mulqueeny told viewers about the recent rebranding of the Aillwee Burren Experience, the Birds of Prey Centre, and the launch of Burren GEOfood taking place during the Burren Slow Food Festival, beginning Friday, 20th May.

RTÉ Today has confirmed that they reached phenomenal numbers with a 22.65% share between 4pm-5pm, and a reach of 250,000. This means 1/5 people watching Irish television had eyes on Clare. The social media content, including

Loop Head prizes, were highly received across both local Clare platforms and RTÉ platforms. The top performing posts of the day were published to social media with the Bunratty location reveal by Dáithí Ó Sé, 198 likes, 8,000 views, reaching 41,000 people, while an original content video from Visit Clare social media reached 104 interactions, with over 8,000 views. Video and image content uploaded to Facebook had a combined reach of 101,788.



Dáithí Ó Sé cruised into Killaloe for the RTÉ Today show, Wednesday, 18th May.

GEOfood blossoms at the Burren Slow Food Festival 2022

Saturday, May 21st, saw the successful launch of GEOfood at the Burren Slow Food Festival 2022. GEOfood is a very exciting programme that aims to connect people to a UNESCO Global Geopark through the food produced in and around the Geopark. The event was launched by Birgitta Hedin-Curtin (MD Burren Smokehouse), Sara Gentilini (GEOfood founder) and Deirdre O’Shea (A/Head of Tourism – Clare County Council). The reigns were then handed over to Ireland’s top food journalists John & Sally McKenna, food, and wine writer Leslie Williams, who wonderfully led the rest of the event.

Hundreds of people attended the launch and were greeted with fascinating interviews, delicious tasting sessions, and product stalls from GEOfood producers. Various food industry professionals also took to the stage to give presentations and insights on such topics as organic food production, the economic value of locally produced food, food education, and more.



There are currently 9 GEOfood Producers in the Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark... And this is just the beginning!

More information about GEOfood can be found at www.burrengeopark.ie/geofood

Corofin Village Streetscape Enhancement

Huge effort is underway in Corofin by both businesses and homeowners to improve the street façade of the village. These enhancement works were supported through funding secured under the Councils Town and Village Paint Scheme 2021 and TVRS Streetscape Scheme 2021. Works are still ongoing and have to date involved painting buildings in vibrant colours, upgrading and restoring their traditional shopfronts and removing unnecessary clutter from the front of the buildings of twenty-one premises. Rural Development have worked in close collaboration with Corofin Tidy Towns, Corofin Future Planning Group, local businesses and property owners in making the village more attractive and welcoming.



Fáilte Ireland Festival & Events funding approved for 2022



Set out below is the approved list of Fáilte Ireland Regional Festival and Events as approved during the Council meeting of 9th May.

Festival/Event Name	Dates Scheduled 2022
The Russell Festival Weekend	24th-28th February
Ennis Book Club Festival	3rd-5th March
The Cliffs of Moher Cycle Challenge	9th April
Consairtín, the National Concertina Convention	21st-24th April
Kilfenora Trad Festival	23rd-24th April
The Doonbeg International Jazz Festival 2022	3rd-6th June
Clare Food & Drink Fleadh	10th-12th June
Cairde Ras Tailteann	15th-19th June
Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy(SSWC)	2nd-10th July

Féile Brian Ború	6th-10th July
Junior Tour of Ireland 2022	12th-17th July
Ring of Clare Cycle	16th July
Scariff Harbour Festival	29th-31st July
Kilrush Traditional Music & Set Dancing Festival	27th July-1st August
Feakle International Traditional Music Festival	4th-8th August
Ennis European Culture Week 2022	8th-12th August
Caherconnell International Furnace Festival	27th-28th August
Ennis International Fantastic Film Festival (EIFF)	28th-30th October
Ennis Trad Festival	10th-14th November

Pride of Place Awards



Pride of Place is an all-island competition that recognises improvements made by local communities to create civic pride in their area. In 2021, Clare County Council nominated two communities to represent the best community and volunteer activism across this rich sector of County Clare's

society. In recognition of the excellent progress made in the Ballyvaughan area, Ballyvaughan Community Development Group prepared a submission for the Pride of Place competition and interviewed with the judging panel during early autumn in the 0-300 population category. 2018 runners up in the Islands and Coastal Community category, Spanish Point Community Group were again nominated by the council in recognition of the significant improvements made, based on feedback from the 2018 adjudication, over the subsequent three years.

Award Ceremony was held in Killarney on 16th May and Spanish Point were runners up in their category. The Rural Development Directorate would like to extend our congratulations to both the Spanish Point and Ballyvaughan communities for their excellent performance in the 2021 competition.

National Age Friendly Convention



From l-r: Susan Harvey, OPC Member; Maurice Harvey, OPC Chair; Larry Hally, OPC Vice-Chair; Mary Hogan, OPC Member; and Karen Fennessy, Clare Age Friendly Programme Manager.

A Clare delegation attended Age Friendly Ireland's Older People's Convention hosted by Meath County Council.

The theme of the convention was "Live Well – Be Well" with guest speakers including Professor Rose Anne Kenny from Trinity College and author of *Age Proof: the new science of living a longer and healthier life*; Paul Hillman, Assistant Commissioner of Roads Policing & Community Engagement; Deirdre Lang, Director of Nursing, HSE; Áine Brady, CEO, 3rd Age Foundation; and Brian McIvor, Writer and Broadcaster. Various workshops were held around the topics of Nutrition, Climate Action, Third Age, Sustainable Living and Healthy Age Friendly Homes.

Joint Policing Committee

The Clare Joint Policing Committee was held online on 30th May, 2022. JPC members from the Council, Gardaí, Community, Oireachtas, and Elected Members attended an in-person meeting in the Council Chamber, along with members of the media. Chief Supt. Collieran presented a comparison of crime statistics from 2020/2021 to 2021/2022, noting that some of the figures had increased due to an increase in activity since Covid-19, e.g. burglaries and shop theft.

The Gardaí's presentation was welcomed by JPC members and generated a lot of discussion and questions from JPC Members. In particular, the Gardaí were praised for their management of the huge crowds drawn to recent GAA matches in Cusack Park which passed off without incident. There was a lot of discussion around bogus tradesman and roving criminal gangs operating at present.

Community Activities Fund

Clare Local Community Development Committee secured €278,000 towards Community Activities Funds in late 2021. The grants were advertised in February 2022 and the Clare LCDC adjudicated on applications in March.

153 community groups will benefit from allocation of approximately €170,00 to help with running costs of their groups. 18 groups will benefit from larger grants totalling €108,000 including 6 playgrounds who benefitted from grants totalling €55,000.

Council welcomes pilot project to support local authority engagement with marginalised communities

Clare County Council has welcomed the announcement by Minister of State for Charities and Community Development, Joe O'Brien TD, that County Clare has been selected for a pilot project to support local authority engagement with marginalised communities in planning and decision-making processes.

Four Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs), including Clare, have been selected to develop and test engagement strategies to support inclusive participation.

The project aims to develop toolkits that can be adapted and used by local authorities and other State agencies to enable better engagement with hard-to-reach groups.

Following an expressions of interest process administered by Pobal on behalf of the Department of Rural and Community Development, funding of up to €40,000 has been approved for each of the four LCDCs.

Clare, Fingal, Galway City and Wicklow will undertake pilot programmes to support participation and engagement by marginalised and disadvantaged communities in the Local Economic and Community Planning (LECP) process which is currently underway in each local authority area.

The successful Clare LCDC submission was prepared and submitted in partnership with Clare Public Participation Network (PPN), Clare Local Development Company (CLDC) and Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB).

Announcing the successful applicants, Minister O'Brien said: "I am really pleased to announce the four pilots to lead the way in the engagement of marginalised communities. I have made up to €40,000 in Dormant Accounts funding available to each of the four LCDCs to act as exemplars in reaching out to those furthest from participation and the decision-making processes. I hope that the learnings gathered will inform enhanced engagement with marginalised groups by local decision-making bodies, and ensure better outcomes for all members of our communities."

Clare LCDC is currently planning for review of the existing Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021, and preparation of a new Plan to be launched in 2023.

Clr PJ Ryan, Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, said: "I welcome the selection of County Clare for this initiative. This pilot project, supported by the Department of Rural and Community Development, will run in parallel with the preparation of a new Local Economic and Community Plan,

to support greater and improved participation and engagement by marginalised and disadvantaged communities."

Pat Dowling, Chief Executive, Clare County Council, said: "Clare County Council is committed to the principles of equality of access, participation and outcome for all in relation to service delivery. This pilot project will support inclusive participation in County Clare and beyond."

Paul Patton, Chair, Clare Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), said: "Clare LCDC is delighted to be chosen by the Department of Rural and Community Development to undertake this pilot project to ensure the voice and participation of marginalised and disadvantaged communities is embedded in the development of the new Local Economic and Community Plan, due to be launched in 2023."

In addition to the pilot programme, information and resources are being provided to all local authorities to support their engagement with marginalised communities, the Department of Rural and Community Development has advised. National events will showcase good practice in relation to engagement strategies, with inputs from experts and national advocacy and representative organisations. This work supports Ireland's commitment to sustainable development, and fulfils a strategic objective under Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities, the five-year strategy to support the community and voluntary sector in Ireland.

Attending a recent event to launch the project, Minister O'Brien said: "In addition to the pilots, I am delighted to be here to attend the first of two national events for LCDCs and advocacy groups to share good practice in consultation and engagement of marginalised groups, in planning and decision-making processes. The voice of all members of our communities must be present in the design, implementation and review of decisions that impact on all of our lives – inclusive consultation and meaningful engagement are key to this. Ultimately, the best decisions are those which are made together, with the opportunity for everyone to share their perspective. Today's event will consider not just the high-level policy context, but also existing best practice and experience, and available resources on inclusion of marginalised groups in decision-making processes."

A second event later this year will review the pilots' experience and focus on sharing learnings to encourage discussion on the opportunities for engagement, and how they are best embedded in consultation processes.

Clare Covid-19 Volunteer Recognition Event



Clare County Council and the Clare Volunteer Centre took the opportunity to recognise and acknowledge the vital contribution that volunteers played in the response to the Covid-19 pandemic at a Volunteer Recognition Event held in the Templegate Hotel. The event was part of a national series of events during National Volunteering Week supported by the Department of Rural and Community Development to acknowledge how important volunteering is to the well-being of our communities.

Over 100 volunteers were in attendance at the event and were presented with a specially commissioned pin by the Government of Ireland to recognise the contribution of all those who volunteered in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. A further 200 pins were distributed to organisations who were representing the many volunteers who provided a vital link to vulnerable members of our communities.

Sharon Meaney, Manager of the Clare Volunteer Centre, reflected on the important role that volunteers played, “you brought so much more than a loaf of bread or the daily newspaper, you brought a reminder that community had a huge role to play as we navigated through the pandemic, and you were part of that. You brought about new friendships, a sense of connection and kindness – you gave reassurance that we are going to get through this, you brought positivity, hope, compassion and

a smile.... even behind the mask”.

Leas Cathaoirleach Joe Killeen commended the roles that individual volunteers and organisations played, presenting a letter from An Taoiseach, Micheál Martin to Civil Defence Officer, Noel Carmody recognising the contribution of emergency service organisations, including Clare Civil Defence, Clare Red Cross, Order of Malta, St John's Ambulance.

Carmel Kirby, Deputy Chief Executive of Clare County Council, acknowledged the positive partnerships that had developed as a result of the work of the Clare Covid Community Response Forum: “working with the Clare Covid Community Response Forum provided an opportunity for us to work collaboratively with other agencies and voluntary groups in supporting and building capacity within our local communities who were responding to Covid-19. We continue to work with many of these communities as they face new challenges in the response to the Ukraine crisis”.

The volunteers were treated to music by ‘The Really Truly Joyful Ennis Gospel Choir’ and Maurice Harvey, Chairperson of the Older People’s Council recited a poem written by Patricia Anne Moore – “We’ll never have this time again”.



Africa Day 2022 Celebrated in Clare County Council



Some of the speakers, singers and attendees at the Africa Day celebrations in County Hall, with Leas Cathaoirleach Cllr Joe Killeen and Council staff from Rural Development, Pádraig MacCormaic, Jennifer O'Brien and Liam Hayes.

Africa Day (May 25th) was celebrated in Áras Contae an Chláir with the launch of a portrait exhibition celebrating the African Community in County Clare and a joyous celebration of music and song.

The portrait exhibition celebrates the diversity of the African community in Clare, the contribution of Africans to life in the county and the experiences of migrants and second/third generation families here. It features families, singers, carers, refugees, entrepreneurs, people in the asylum process, those who came here for love, people who have made Clare their home by choice, circumstance or necessity. Each one contributing richly to the fabric of the county.

The event featured music from Scoil Chríost Rí Ennis, Holy Family Junior School, the choir of the Redeemed African Church of God and solo singers Yvonne and Gloria, who also sing with Ennis Gospel Choir, as well as being attended by portrait sitters, including a group from the Direct Provision centre in Lisdoonvarna.

Holy Family Junior School have recently been awarded a Yellow Flag recognising their work on diversity and inclusion, and their first-class group represented their hard work in achieving this honour. Speakers from the African community, including Ali Souih from the Moroccan Irish Friendship Association, Pastor Ruth Ogundare and Bolanle Ojulari Hayes, discussed the opportunities and challenges of life in Ireland and reflected on their love of Clare and the sense of community.

Attendees viewed the portraits which were displayed in the Council Chamber and had an opportunity to view the seat of local democracy, seeing the physical space where decisions are made. Removing barriers to participation has been a recent theme in the delivery of projects by Clare County Council, such as the “Promoting Gender Equality & Diversity in Local Government” event and the upcoming Migrant Integration Strategy.

This project was made possible through the participation of over 60 portrait sitters, the work of Cracking Light Productions, Clare Immigrant Support Centre, Association of Nigerians in County Clare, Moroccan Irish Friendship Association, Hope Café Shannon, our council colleagues in Rural Development, Facilities, Print and Communications, as well as the financial support of Irish Aid.



Cathaoirleach welcomes Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2022

The Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr PJ Ryan, has welcomed the announcement of the 2022 Town and Village Renewal Scheme by the Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD.

Speaking on the announcement, the Cathaoirleach said: “Investment in our rural towns and villages is important if we are to make them vibrant and attractive places for people to live and work. Our priorities have shifted since the Covid-19 pandemic with more and more people working remotely in our rural towns and villages so it’s important that we have the infrastructure and facilities in place to support them.”

The Town and Village Renewal Scheme provides funding that aims to support the continued regeneration of rural towns and villages. This year’s scheme includes a new funding stream that will support local authorities to identify and purchase vacant and derelict buildings so that these can be taken into public ownership and be converted and developed for community use and the public good. Under the new Building Acquisition Measure up to €400,000 will be available per local authority in 2022. Local authorities are being encouraged to engage with communities to identify suitable properties and come up with a proposal for their future use and apply to the Department for the funding.

The Cathaoirleach encouraged community groups across County Clare to apply for funding under this year’s scheme, noting that “we want our towns to be attractive places where people want to live, work, socialise and raise a family”.

The measures that will be supported by the 2022 Town and Village Renewal Scheme include:

- Tackling dereliction in town centres
- Turning vacant properties into remote working and community spaces
- Supporting local authorities to run innovative marketing campaigns targeted at attracting remote workers to their county
- Investing in green spaces, parks and recreational amenities
- Upgrading and improving shop fronts and streetscapes on Main Streets
- Projects that support and enhance the night-time economy and add vibrancy to town centres.

The Town and Village Renewal Scheme is administered through the local authorities, who are required to work closely with local communities and local businesses to develop and implement proposals. Grants of €20,000 to €500,000 are available under the scheme.

Clare County Council’s Chief Executive, Pat Dowling, welcomed the scheme, saying that: “The pandemic created many challenges for our rural towns and villages but it also created many opportunities. The pandemic has given us a renewed appreciation for rural living and has created opportunities for remote and blended working arrangements. This scheme provides the means for continued investment in projects that will serve to improve quality of life for residents, attract new business, encourage visitors and ultimately provide an economic boost for the county.”

Leonard Cleary, Director of Rural Development, Clare County Council, said that “the focus on the renewal of our towns and villages and the continued promotion of the expansion of our remote working hubs creates opportunities to showcase the county’s towns and villages so that they are attractive places for remote workers to live and work”.

Community groups who have identified projects with all the necessary permissions in place are being invited to submit an Expression of Interest to Clare County Council. Expressions of Interest received will be assessed based on the priorities as contained in the Scheme Outline. A total of 9 proposals can then be put forward for submission to the Department of Rural and Community Development. Selection of projects under the scheme will be by means of a competitive process so Expressions of Interest should include sufficient detail to enable them to be considered for an application for funding to the Department.

More details on the scheme and an Expression of Interest Form can be downloaded from Council’s website: <https://www.clarecoco.ie/services/community/grants/townandvillagerenewal/>

WEST CLARE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Schedule of Municipal District Works & Roadworks Programme

Emphasis this month is very much on the resurfacing of roads and delivery of the roadworks programme.

Road recycling works



Resurfacing/surface dressing



Resurfacing/surface dressing



"Ralumac" microasphalt thin cold surface overlays



Preparation works



EuroVelo bicycle racks and repair stations



CIS



Killadysert Pier



Other

Base for plaque, Kilkee Library



Safety railing around gas tank, Cliff Quarry depot



Drop kerbs at entrance to Kilrush Town Hall



Unsafe for Swimming warning signs, Doughmore Beach



Active Travel new pedestrian crossing – Doolin Fitz’s Cross



Ballyvaughan flood relief works



Beaches

There are a number of Blue Flag (Kilkee, Cappagh) and Green Coast (Seafield, Quilty) and other popular beaches in the West Clare MD – Kilrush LEA is providing services to these within resources. The bathing season officially commenced in mid-May. Three Beach Operatives have been assigned to Kilkee. They will be assigned to public toilet and litter/refuse removal duties.



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

TRANSPORTATION

Roadworks Programme and Operations

Clare County Council has received its road grant allocations for 2022. The overall allocation for Roads in the 2022 Roadworks Programme is €48.4million which comprises Transport Infrastructure Ireland, Department of Transport and National Transport Authority grant allocations along with IPBMI and own resource allocations.

The Roadworks Programme for 2022 has been prepared as part of the SMDW for 2022 and has been adopted by all four Municipal District meetings in March.

Rollout of the 2022 programme of work has commenced in all of the Municipal Districts.

Strategic Transportation

Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy

The Draft Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS) document was approved by the National Transport Authority (NTA) Board during the summer of 2020. The LSMATS public consultation, to which all Members were invited, was launched by the NTA on 2nd September, 2020 and was on public display for an 8 week period up to 30th October. There were over 112 submissions during the process which the NTA have considered. The revised Draft LSMATS document was published on the 26th April 2022. There will be a consultation period for 6 weeks until 10th June. A presentation of the revised draft LSMATS document was made by the NTA to the Physical Development SPC on May 31st, 2022, and a submission on the strategy is currently being prepared by Clare County Council.

Connecting Ireland

This project commenced in 2021 and is being led by the National Transport Authority. The aim of the project is to improve the public transport service provision in Clare by improving scheduling, dealing with gaps in the service and by introducing new public transport routes. Liaison and information sharing has commenced between the NTA and Clare County Council Municipal Districts and Road Design Section to support the NTA in a comprehensive rollout of the project. The local link from Kildysart to Kilrush has been rolled out during 2021 as part of this project by the NTA.

Active Travel Programme 2022

Funding for the Active Travel 2022 programme was announced by the NTA for County Clare on 24th January, 2022. The total allocation for projects across all MDs in the county is €5,298,000.

The following is brief overview of the status of ongoing projects:

- Construction works ongoing in Tulla, Quin, Boston and Ruan
- Construction works to commence in Doolin and Lisdoonvarna
- Tender packages being prepared for Clarisford, Dromindoorra and Kilmaley
- Statutory processes being undertaken for Spanish Point
- Detailed design being advanced for St Flannan's School in Inagh, Ennis Road in Miltown Malbay and Latoon Cycling Scheme
- Preliminary analysis being carried out for Ennis Park and Stride and Ennis Public Lighting
- Concept designs being prepared for Clare Road in Ennis, Tulla Road in Ennis, Ballycasey in Shannon and Lissycasey.

Public lighting

Cork County Council published the tender for the Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project in County Clare and four other counties on 1st October, 2020. Following the successful conclusion of the procurement process a contractor has been appointed as the Design Build Works Contract for this regional project. At present 52% of public lights in Clare have been changed to LED through the current maintenance contract.

For the benefit of Councillors, the following are the options available to facilitate reporting of public lighting faults:

- Internet: Direct reporting on our website – <https://enerveo.com/report-a-fault/republic-of-ireland/>
- Phone: Enevero (Formerly SEE Airtricity) dedicated call centre at 0818-372772
- Local Authority Identification – via Local Authority's website or contact number. <https://www.clarecoco.ie/services/roads-and-transport/road-maintenance-issues/report-a-broken-streetlight/>

Road Design Office

Current Projects: May 2022

It should be noted that this monthly project update is relevant only to the current period and the milestone progressions during that period.

TII Road Safety Projects

A progress meeting with the TII was held on 19th January, 2022.

Project	Progress Update
TII HD 15 Sites	<p>For the N85:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The revised concept design for Clareaabbey roundabout has been approved by the TII. Modelling of the proposed changes and their effects on the traffic flow is necessary and this is being progressed by the TII through their consultant. The TII are of the view that any proposed design for the Lahinch Rd/Shanaway Rd junction should incorporate Active Travel Strategy and plan for the wider area. The RDO are reviewing the current designs to incorporate these elements. The RDO carried out a topographical survey of the N85 from Clareaen roundabout to the start of the speed limit zone and are currently developing conceptual designs for this area. <p>For the N68:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Derrycrossaun junction is now substantially completed.
TII HD 17 Sites	<p>For the N68:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A topographical survey of the Monvana Rd. junction N68/L2510 is complete and conceptual designs are progressing. <p>For the N67:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Topographical surveys of junctions N67/L1022, N67/50222/, N67/L50221 and N67/L1016 now completed, conceptual designs for N67/L50222 and N67/L50221 are completed and Feasibility Reports are being developed. Conceptual designs progressing for N67/L1022 and N67/1016. Gateway 1 approval has been received from the TII for the proposed safety scheme at Minister Place, Kilkee. A comprehensive traffic and pedestrian survey was undertaken in early August, a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit has been carried out and CCC are awaiting report from Auditors. This will form part of the Preliminary Design Report for submission to TII. The junction between Mount Charles Terrace and the N67 has been surveyed and a preliminary design to improve visibility has been developed. A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit for this junction has been carried out with Minister Place and CCC is awaiting on report from Auditors. A Feasibility Report is being prepared for submission to the TII.

Low Cost Safety Schemes 2022

- An application for 2022 LCS Schemes was submitted to the Department of Transport in October 2021. The Department of Transport has allocated a total of €529,000 for safety improvement works on regional and local roads for 2022. The design process for these schemes is ongoing.

Other Projects 2022

Project	Progress Update
EuroVelo 1	The project is substantially completed. All the signage has now been installed.
Liaison with NTA regarding bus stops	• Construction works for 2021 are completed.
Liaison with NTA regarding bus shelters	Works on the last remaining bus shelter at Newmarket is complete.
Road Schedule & Queries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Search requests from the public and Municipal Districts regarding the road schedule are being carried out on an ongoing basis. Updates to the roads schedule is carried out as updates are being received.
Cycle and traffic counts	Ongoing monitoring at various locations.
Planning Reports	Planning reports are being provided for the Planning Department on a continuous basis.
Cycle Infrastructure County Clare	Surveying and mapping of the existing cycle infrastructure for the entire county has commenced and will continue as an ongoing project for 2022. Collaboration with IT and GIS has also commenced to find an optimal solution to develop an information map available for public view/download as an app.
R352 Henchy's Cross Junction	The design is completed and has been issued to the MD for construction. The Department of Transport has allocated €70,000 for 2022 as a Specific Improvement Grant to complete the works commenced in 2021.



Newmarket on Fergus: Bus shelter.



Cliffs of Moher Coastal Walk upgrade.

Bridge Rehabilitation

2022 Bridge Rehabilitation grant is €602,000.

- AA Screening: Currently Preparing Tender Documents for 2022 Bridge Projects. Tenders returned. Consultant appointed.
- Bolooghra Bridge: Initial survey complete, Tender documents for consultancy issued and returned, currently being assessed. Consultant appointed. Contractor appointed. NIS completed, environmental issues to be resolved prior to commencing works. NIS sent to Development Applications Unit at the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for comment.
- Killestry Bridge: Contractor on site, works complete. Snagging on going.
- Scariff Bridge: Contractor on site, works 85% complete.
- Cavanagh's Bridge: Repair Works out to tender.
- Cooraclare Bridge: Repair Works out to tender.
- Drumullan Bridge: Repair Works out to tender.
- Gortnamearacaun Bridge: Repair Works out to tender.

Health and Safety

The Health and Safety Team's schedule of Annual Safety Statement and Risk Assessment reviews in addition to their schedule of Safety Inspections is underway for 2022.

The Top Level H&S Objectives approved by the Safety Management Committee in February 2022 have commenced implementation with face-to-face briefings delivered on Health and Safety across a range of Departments and the development of a suite of Safety Posters and supporting toolbox talks.

Bespoke training on the location of underground services is being rolled out in the coming weeks in order to avoid contact with underground services when undertaking excavation works and a one-day Line Manager H&S Training Course is scheduled for 3rd June.

General Design Office

Cliffs of Moher Coastal Walk North – Proposed Repair and Upgrade

Clare County Council and Cliffs of Moher Experience are preparing an application to the Department of Rural and Community Development through the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) to fund the upgrade and repair of a section of the Cliffs of Moher Coastal Walk.

The repair and upgrade of this section to the north of the Cliffs of Moher Experience is essential to improve visitor safety and the reinstatement of biodiversity along the cliff edge. The objective of the proposed project is to upgrade existing route with a new board walk for approximately 1 kilometre stretch of cliff edge and to repair existing road and pathways to include partial replacement of the Liscannor stone wall, stiles, livestock fencing, gravel for paths and replacement of signage at the Surfers Path walk.

Town and Village Renewal Schemes

Corrofin Town and Village Renewal Scheme

Topographical survey finalised and on file. Preliminary design investigations ongoing.

Parteen Town and Village Renewal Scheme

Tender submissions received 6th May. Tender assessments and evaluations complete, pre award actions and procedures ongoing.

Clonlara Town and Village Renewal Scheme

Topographical survey and preliminary design proposals ongoing.

CAPITAL DELIVERY / PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE

The main updates relating to the PMO major projects during the month of May are as follows.

Cloughnainchy Flood Relief Scheme

Clare County Council await return of land agreements in order to progress the scheme. Consultation with Cloughnainchy residents is ongoing.

Ennistymon Inner Relief Road and Bridge Crossing (Blake's Corner)

The Council have been advised by An Bord Pleanála that the Inspector's Report is due to pass to the Board in the next week or so for their consideration and determination. That process is likely to take approximately a month so we now expect to have a determination on the CPO application by mid to late July 2022. This decision will determine our next course of action but if favourable, we will proceed immediately to complete the detailed design and tender documentation required to procure a Contractor for the works.

Errinagh Canal Bank Walkway

The programme of works involves the restoration and enhancement of a section of the original pathway for the benefit of a multitude of users, both from the local community and the student population. The clearance works, involving cutback of overhanging trees and removal of surface growth has already rejuvenated the amenity, allowing the area to be opened up, and facilitating increased footfall. The Contractor is scheduled to return to site in the coming weeks to resurface the pathway with compacted limestone, thereby preserving access, and enabling continued maintenance into the future. These improvement works are being undertaken as an interim measure as related to same, the Members will be aware of the proposed Greenway /Blueway from Limerick City to Scarriff and we are working closely with Waterways Ireland in this regard. Invasive species treatment continued in May, with attendance to site by the Contractor.

Killaloe Bridge and By-Pass

On 10th May, 2022, the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Michael McGrath TD, announced new measures to address the risk posed by exceptional inflation and supply chain disruption on projects being delivered under the public works contract.

Further announcements and guidance were received on Monday, 23rd May, and these documents are being carefully considered and evaluated by the Project Team and Contractor in terms of project re-sequencing and programming which will assist parties in calculating the Ex-Gratia Payment payable to John Sisk & Sons (Holdings) Ltd under the Inflation/Supply Chain Delay Co-operation Framework Agreement.

Related, the Letter of Acceptance and Chief Executive's order formally appointing RPS Consulting Engineers Ltd as consultant to provide Site Supervisory roles/Resident Engineering Staff has been prepared and will be issued once we have the Main Contractor's detailed construction programme to hand. Other works currently ongoing include:

- The few remaining Land Acquisitions are currently being progressed by Clare County Council and its agents.
- The results are still awaited (delay in testing due to Covid-19 pandemic) from the detailed testing and carbon dating analysis of archaeological items uncovered during the investigation works carried out on site in 2021. Following the provision of these results to Rubicon Heritage Services Ltd, the final reports can be prepared, and a public presentation organised as promised. We would hope to be able to hold this later in 2022.

Kilkee Flood Relief Scheme

Our scheme consultant has identified an area for a small amount of additional site investigation works to be carried out. CCC are liaising with the contractor to progress the works as soon as possible to minimise disruption during the busy summer season.

Threshold surveys were carried out recently on a number of properties along Strand Line and Marine Parade. The finished floor levels recorded will be used for damage calculation during the Cost Benefit Analysis. The Hydrology and Hydraulics reports have been updated by JBA following receipt of CCC and OPW comments. Both updated reports are under review.

A recent site visit was held involving CCC, OPW and scheme consultant JBA to review the initial design options for dealing with surface water in low-lying areas. An updated report on the wave overtopping model has been submitted by the consultant for CCC's review. The report includes inundation mapping for the various storm scenarios based on the existing coastal defences and the preliminary options for new and/or upgraded existing defences. The breeding birds survey commenced in spring and will be ongoing during the summer months. Mammal traps have also been deployed at various suitable locations in the area.

Progress on the scheme and upcoming works is available on the project website at www.kilkeefrs.ie alongside associated scheme literature and the project information video.

Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF)

This matter is due to be heard by the High Court on July 19th next, the outcome of which will determine our next course of action. If favourable, we will be able to move forward immediately with further Surveys, Geotechnical Investigations, Detailed design, and engagement with the relevant Landowners regarding acquisition of the necessary lands.

Lough Donnell Culvert Repair works

The Part VIII planning application has been submitted for these essential repair works. It is hoped to have a decision in the coming week following which we will brief the Members at MD level before tabling on the agenda of the July Council Meeting for consideration and decision.

Miltown Malbay Flood Relief Scheme

Mutually acceptable design options are being further considered in order to move forward with this important piece of infrastructure. The selected option may necessitate a further planning application. Once agreement with all affected landowners has been finalised and any approvals if required are in place, we will retender the works to reflect the changing circumstances in the Construction Industry and subject to funding approval, move at pace with the appointment of the successful Contractor.

N19 Shannon Airport Access Road

Phase 3 (Design and Environmental Evaluation) is currently progressing. Nationwide Data Collection Ltd were appointed in May with regard to the collection and preliminary analysis of traffic survey data. Identifying pedestrian and cyclist movements at junctions is also a key element, particularly for developing the design further at each junction. Bluesky was appointed and have provided the consultants with Aerial & Ortho Imagery of the area.

Earthsound Geophysics Ltd have also been appointed to complete Archaeology & Geophysical Surveys of the site. The purpose of this survey is to provide information both on the location and extent of any potential geophysical anomalies and to assess the extent and state of preservation of archaeological remains, if present, as part of the process of archaeological assessment and risk management for this scheme.

The results gained from these surveys will assist the further development of the scheme design including the layout and junction arrangements, identifying the lands required for the scheme and the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment. Priority Geotechnical Ltd have recently demobilised from site following the completion of the intrusive ground investigation works, such as trial pitting, probing and drilling. During the Summer months the laboratory testing and analysis of the excavated material from site will be completed which will then see the conclusion of this site investigations works contract. Phase 3 is expected to take up to mid-2023 to complete. As always, further information and associated literature on the project can be accessed via the scheme website www.shannonaccess.ie

N85 Kilnamona Road Improvement Scheme

We are nearing completion of a Design Brief which will enable us to tender the works requirement and appoint Technical Advisors at the earliest juncture to develop and progress the design development for this scheme.

Piers and Harbours

Clare County Council was successful in receiving grant funding of €302,500 under the 'Brexit Adjustment: Local Authority Marine Infrastructure Scheme' for minor projects at the following locations: Doonmore Pier, Liscannor Pier, Shannon Estuary, Cappagh Pier, Knock Pier, Labasheeda Pier and Kildysert Pier. Works at each pier will commence over the summer months.

Public Realm Regeneration project (Ennis)

The advance works contract involving the Water Mains upgrade by Irish Water and a Medium Voltage cable replacement by ESB Networks commenced this month and will continue until September 2022. These works are necessary to ensure the long term integrity of the towns water mains and electrical supplies, and will minimise the long-term need for future excavation of pavements. Irish Water/Shareridge have a Public Liaison Officer in place and will continue to inform all affected businesses of works programme.

Tender documents for the Public Realm element of the works are currently under review and will be issued to the 5 no. shortlisted contractors in the coming weeks, subject to Department approval. We would expect to award the Contract later in the summer with the successful Contractor commencing on site in late September. Regrettably, there will be disturbance experienced during these works, but this is unavoidable, and every effort will be made to minimise it as much as possible. We will engage with Elected Members and affected Business owners/Residents as the work progresses to keep everyone informed of developments.

Quin Flood Relief Scheme

Following the Members' approval of the Part VIII application at the May monthly meeting for this scheme, we now await the expiration of the standstill period following which we will be advancing to procurement of Contractors to carry out the works at the earliest juncture. We are in discussion with the OPW regarding the possibility of their Direct Labour workforce assisting with part of the required construction works.

Remediation of sites containing ACM

Contract documents with respect to appointment of technical advisors are scheduled for signing on 21st June. This will allow design development to progress and for the preparation of tender documents for main remediation contract. The sites continue to be monitored by Council staff having been rendered safe following the carrying out of temporary works in consultation with the EPA.

Shannon Town & Environs Flood Relief Scheme

The second Hydraulic Workshop was carried out recently involving CCC, OPW and scheme consultant RPS. Some minor amendments to the model were identified which are currently being actioned by the consultant. The modelling team have now commenced their model runs for the various storm scenarios under existing climate conditions. This activity will also

include coastal-fluvial joint probability scenario runs.

An updated report on the structural stability of the existing embankments has been submitted by RPS and is currently under review. The Hydrology report has also been issued recently for CCC/OPW review and approval whilst work on the Hydraulic report continues to progress.

A recent environmental site visit was held involving the ecology and environmental leads from RPS alongside CCC and OPW representatives. The visit is part of a number of studies and surveys that have been assessing a range of environmental aspects on the scheme. SAA's maintenance works to the western embankments has commenced and are still expected to be complete by late summer.

Issue 2 of the Project Newsletter is complete and available on the project website alongside further information on the scheme: www.shannontownandenvironsfrs.com

Springfield, Clonlara FRS

Construction works on the embankments continue on site which are at 65% completion at this stage. The associated Culverts and Pumps for the scheme have been ordered with the culverts expected to be delivered and installed by the end of August. The Geophysical survey has now been completed with Well surveys in progress and ongoing environmental and water monitoring ongoing as required. Overall, the scheme is progressing well and is due for completion in late October/early November 2022.

West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 1: Kilrush to Kilkee)

Clare County Council in conjunction with ROD Consulting Engineers are progressing the project in accordance with the 'Code of Best Practice for National and Regional Greenways'. A request for tender has been issued for the appointment of an Independent Agronomist for the overall West Clare Railway Greenway scheme. The Agronomist will be available to affected Landowners to assist with negotiations and give an impartial opinion on land agreements. Tenders are due back in early June and it is hoped to appoint the Independent Agronomist immediately subsequent to this.

West Clare Railway Greenway (Section 2: Ennis to Ennistymon)

The initial project team meeting was held in May with Clare County Council and ROD Consulting Engineers. Information gathering and project administration has commenced. Following the appointment of the aforementioned Independent Agronomist, it is hoped to begin landowner consultation and route selection. As always, we welcome comments or suggestions from members of the public which can be emailed to pmoadmin@clarecoco.ie.

White Strand Miltown Malbay, Coastal Protection Minor Works

Following completion of the Preliminary Design and Options Selection Report, we now await a meeting with the relevant section of the OPW to agree the next steps of development of this project.

FIRE & BUILDING CONTROL SECTION

Recent Training Courses

The following brigade training courses were held during May:

- Breathing Apparatus Cylinder Filling Training for Ennistymon and Killaloe personnel
- Wildland Fire Fighting Course held in Ennis Fire Station and at various outdoor venues throughout the County
- QQI accredited Compartment Fire Behaviour Initial Training Course held in Ballinrobe & Sligo Training Centres

- Snorkell Instructor Refresher Training Course held in Shannon Fire Station
- QQI accredited Hazardous Materials Initial Training Course held in Shannon Fire Station
- 3 Recruit Fire-fighters from County Clare are attending a QQI accredited Fire-fighting Skills Course in Tuam Fire Station from 16th May to 3rd June. Upon successful completion, one of the fire-fighters will be based in Shannon Fire Station and two will be based in Killaloe Fire Station.

Fire & Building Control Section Main Activities	April 2022	May 2022 (Up to 27.05.22)	Year to Date 2022
Number of Emergency Calls Attended	76	51	398
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Received	3	4	29
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Granted	4	5	32
Number of Fire Safety Certificates Invalidated	0	0	0
Number of Disability Access Certificates Received	4	2	18
Number of Disability Access Certificates Granted	4	2	22
Number of Commencement Notices Received	26	37	167
Number of Dangerous Structures/Places Complaints	1	1	6

(Note: In the May Monthly Report, the April figures related to 1st to 25th April due to timing of report)

FIRE & BUILDING CONTROL SECTION

Clare Civil Defence

Operational Duties

Civil Defence provided medical cover for the following events:

- Teenage Disco held in the Queen's Hotel, Ennis, as part of a joint initiative between Clare CD and An Garda Síochána
- Clare v Limerick Senior Hurling Championship match in Cusack Park
- Clare v Waterford Senior Hurling Championship match in Cusack Park
- Cycle Against Suicide Charity Cycle
- Newmarket On Fergus Agricultural Show
- Ennis Darkness into Light Event
- Ennis Tidy Towns hosting Presidential Visit at St Flannan's College.

Civil Defence also provided the following operational duties:

- Members of the Drone Team assisted Clare County Fire and Rescue Service at a forest/gorse fire in Kilmaley.

Members Training & Professional Development

- Members completed examinations for their National Qualification in Emergency Medical Technology in Portlaoise.
- Members attended training sessions for Search & Rescue, Emergency Medicine, Swiftwater Rescue and Radio Communications.

ENVIRONMENT

Tidy Towns Awards Recognition

Ennis welcomed Uachtarán na hÉireann, Michael D Higgins to celebrate and acknowledge the county town's success in the 2021 National SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition.

The Environment Section played a vital role in achieving in this most prestigious award. The approach to biodiversity in Ennis is evidence of the co-operative spirit in the town between Ennis Tidy Towns and the Gardening section and the Waste Enforcement team and this was acknowledged by the adjudicator who said they 'admired wildflowers in the no-mow areas and the pollinator-friendly planting at several locations in and around Ennis'.

The Environment Section Gardening team have developed a programme of planting perennial and pollinator friendly species as part of our annual work programme. Our waste enforcement team also contributed to maintaining Ennis as a litter free area through our collaborative work with Ennis Tidy Town group and local businesses.



Environmental Awareness

An Taisce Green Schools Programme

During May 21 schools were awarded the An Taisce Green Schools flag. This includes 17 primary schools, 2 secondary schools and 2 pre-schools from across Co. Clare. Renewal Green flags were awarded to these schools for activities and projects that were undertaken in the areas of Waste, Energy, Biodiversity, Travel, Water and the Marine Environment.

St John Bosco Community College Kildysart received an additional regional award for their work on Global Citizenship Litter and Waste.

Greening of Festivals/Events

The Environment Section worked with the Tourism Department in assessing 19 applications for Fáilte Ireland Festival and Events Funding 2022. As part of the funding application applicants were invited to outline steps that they were undertaking to reduce the environmental impact of their festival or event. Festivals and events were scored based on the submission of an environmental management plan. Recommendations for greening were also made as part of the grant. As part of the recommendation groups were asked to participate in the free online Clare Green Festival training programme at: www.fiftyshadesgreener.ie/offers/LcMJBRrN/checkout?coupon_code=GREENERCLARE

Environmental Campaigns

During May, we promoted the following environmental initiatives and messaging:

Campaign detail	Promotion details
Bathing Waters 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media Release on announcement of Blue Flag and Green Coast awards Public consultation in the identification of bathing waters Clare Champion advert @ClareCoCo and @GreenerClare social media promotion
ERP Waste Electrical Recycling Event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advert of the The Green Clare page Social media promotion on @ClareCoCo and @GreenerClare
The Clare Echo Green Clare page	<p>The following was promoted during April 2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to Manage Green Waste Ukrainian Family Bike Appeal Cigarette littering.

Water Enforcement and Scientific Services

The table below summarises the work of the scientific team to date in 2022:

Water Enforcement Scientific Team	May 2022	Jan-May 2022
Planning applications (Domestic)	56	199
Planning applications (Large Developments)	1	16
Planning applications (Forestry)	3	52
Planning applications (Agriculture)	0	9
Inspection of Section 4 licenced premises	5	12
Domestic Wastewater Treatment Plant Inspections (NIP Plan)	0	38
Pollution complaints received	22	59
Warning & advisory letters issued	0	5
Enforcement actions (\$12 issued or number of 'active' cases)	0	0

Science course given by LAWPRO/EPA and Site Suitability Assessment for Domestic Wastewater Treatment Plants Course given by NWSTG.

Laboratory and Technical Support

The bathing season officially commenced on 1st June with the preseason samples taken in the last week of May. Fourteen designated bathing areas will be monitored throughout the season until 15th September next. These bathing areas are of vital importance to County Clare and to all our visitors. The 14 designated areas are listed below.

Designated Bathing Area Monitoring Locations 2022	
Bishopsquarter	Kilkee
Fanore	Carrigaholt
Lahinch	Cappagh Pier (Kilrush)
Whitstrand (Milltown)	Ballyallia
Spanish Point	Mountshannon
Seafeld Quilty	Ballycuggeran
Whitstrand (Doonbeg)	Seafeld Quilty

During the month staff have taken part in three-day Catchment

Under the Bathing Water Quality Regulations 2008 (SI No 79 of 2008), Clare County Council invited the public to comment on the existing designated bathing areas and to make submissions in relation to potential new designations. Advertisements were placed on the Council web site and in the local media. Closing date for submissions to Clare County Council is 9th June 2022 and can be posted to Environment Section, Clare County Council, Áras Contae an Chláir, New Road, Ennis, Co. Clare or submitted by email to enviroff@clarecoco.ie.

Clare County Council’s Lifeguard Service commences Saturday 4th June

A comprehensive, daily lifeguard service from 11:00am to 7:00pm operates from 4th June to 31st August at Lahinch, Spanish Point, Kilkee and Fanore. The lifeguard service at White Strand Miltown Malbay, White Strand Doonbeg, Cappa, Mountshannon, Killaloe (Ballycuggeran) will operate for weekends in June, with full time cover starting on 27th June. Lifeguard cover at Bishops Quarter and Seafield will operate full time from 27th June. Full-time cover will cease on 31st August, but lifeguards on the Blue Flag locations will continue the service during the first two weekends of September.

Bathing Water Quality Report

The EPA report on bathing water quality in Ireland in 2021 was published in this month. All of County Clare’s monitored beaches received excellent water quality status.

Bathing Water Quality Status for 2021	
Location	Status
Bishops Quarter	Excellent
Fanore	Excellent
Lahinch	Excellent
Whitestrand Miltown	Excellent
Spanish Point	Excellent
Seafield	Excellent
Whitestrand Doonbeg	Excellent
Kilkee	Excellent
Carrigaholt Beach	Excellent
Cappa Pier	Excellent
Ballyallia Lake	Excellent
Mountshannon	Excellent
Ballycuggeran	Excellent

River Monitoring Programme 2022

The Environment Section has completed the fifth round of river water sampling in May. Our sampling programme has been agreed in advance with the EPA.

Drinking Water Monitoring

Clare County Council is required to sample and analyse all public water supplies including public supplied Group water schemes as part of the Service Level Agreement. The level of monitoring required is agreed with Irish Water and is based on the population served. The monitoring is spread evenly throughout the year with all analysis results forwarded to IW in the agreed format.

Wastewater Treatment Plants

Laboratory Staff in conjunction with Area based Technicians monitor all Licensed and Certified discharges for compliance with their discharge limits. In Clare, monitoring varies from monthly to twice yearly, based on population served. Monitoring is spread throughout the year with the second round completed in February.

Gardening

As always, May proves to be a very busy month for the Gardening Team, with the preparation and planting of summer flowers and plants in a number of public spaces.

In line with Clare County Council’s ongoing commitment to implementing actions contained within the All Ireland Pollinator Plan, the Gardening Team continue to place an emphasis on the planting of pollinator friendly plant species and perennial species in public spaces.



A new pollinator friendly measure that has been implemented for 2022, has been the temporary suspension of grass cutting (No Mow May) at Áras Contae an Chláir. This measure encourages the growth of naturally occurring pollinator friendly food sources in lawn areas, and is a clear demonstration of how simple actions by the Council and the public can help promote pollinators and biodiversity in our communities.



Plants and flowers are being prepared that will focus on promoting pollinator friendly species and will act as an example to the public of how pollinator friendly measures can be implemented in confined and urban spaces.

Waste Management

Closure Restoration and Aftercare Management Plan (CRAMP)

This project is now complete. Some of the benefits of the newly created 3,300m² wetlands area are:

- Helping achieve a target of the Climate Action Plan.
- Promoting biodiversity in the local area.
- Naturally storing water in the landscape and releasing slowly.
- Improving water quality by capturing pollutants and sediments.
- Helping mitigate against the effects of climate change by acting as a carbon store.

The finished project has now completed the Closure and Restoration aspect of the site and complies with the EPA site licence.



Recycling Centres

Road line marking works at Shannon Recycling Centre are being undertaken to improve the visibility of the one-way system on the site.

Bottle Banks

Glass quantities collected at bottle banks for the first quarter of 2022 have reduced by approx 15% in comparison to the same period for 2021.

Waste Enforcement

Anti-Dumping Initiative

Funding amounting to €93,890 was approved by The Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) under the Anti-Dumping Initiative. Projects include clean-ups, signage, bin enclosures, amnesty days, awareness campaigns, audio and visual warning devices, as well as a bicycle recycling scheme to provide bicycles to Ukrainian refugees in Co. Clare. These projects are underway throughout the County.

Liaising with Tidy Towns Groups across Co. Clare

The adjudication of Tidy Towns competitions is commencing across the county over the coming weeks. This has led to requests for litter pickers, bags, signage, and assistance with clean-ups. Our community wardens continue to work with local groups to facilitate this. An increased level of clean-ups has been underway in Ennis over the last few weeks.

Leave No Trace Training

Leave No Trace training was provided to the Waste Enforcement team over two days in May. It aimed to raise awareness of the principles of Leave No Trace, and assist Community Wardens when giving talks to groups.

Targeted Inspections

In line with the Recommended Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI) plan, the work area prioritised for planned targeted inspections in May was WEEE and batteries. Electrical retailers around the County were

inspected to ensure that they offered a take-back service for used electrical goods. 100% compliance was recorded.

Notifications of Controlled Burning

In May, under the Waste Management (Prohibition of Waste Disposal By Burning) Regulations 2009, 5 notifications of intention to burn were received and processed.

Advertising Signage

The Community Wardens continue to contact businesses to remove advertising signage from public places, in Line with the Litter Pollution Act 1997, as amended. An Awareness campaign, advising the public of the permit application system for advertising signage was run in tandem with this enforcement campaign.

Environmental Monitoring (Illegal Dumping/Litter)

The Waste Enforcement Team responded to 45 complaints relating to waste and litter in May to date. These are currently being investigated and closed out. The wardens continue to liaise with the public in relation to Dog Fouling complaints. Additional signage was purchased and distributed throughout May.

Fines and Directions issued under the Waste Management Act 1996, As Amended and Litter Pollution Act 1997, As Amended

A total of 3 litter fines were issued in May to date, one of which has already been paid.

Blue Flag Awards



The Blue Flag is one of the world's most recognised eco-labels. Beaches and marinas that achieve this accolade must comply with a specific set of criteria relating to water quality, information provision, environmental education, safety and beach management. In order to qualify for this prestigious award, a series of stringent environmental, educational, safety-related and access-related criteria must be met and maintained. At beaches, the bathing water must comply with the excellent standard in accordance with the 2006 EU Bathing Water Directive.

The Green Coast Award is a symbol of environmental excellence. The award is for beaches which have excellent water quality, but which are also prized for their natural, unspoilt environment

Clare has been awarded 9 Blue Flag and 4 Green Coast Awards for the 2022 bathing season.

Blue Flags: Cappa Pier, Kilkee, Whitestrand Doonbeg, Whitestrand Miltown, Spanish Point, Lahinch, Fanore, Ballycuggeran, Mountshannon

Green Coast Awards: Carrigaholt Beach, Ballyallia Lake, Seafield, Bishops Quarter

WATER SERVICES

Annual Service Plan

The Water Services Section of Clare County Council continues to deliver the water services function as per the Service Level Agreement and the 2022 Annual Service Plan with Irish Water. All protocols and working procedures relating to Covid-19 are being adhered to in the delivery of the service. Expenditure to date is 1% below the budget forecast.

Water Services Operations

Water and Wastewater Operations

The following statistics provide an indication of the level of activity/work being carried out by the water and wastewater teams throughout the county from 22nd April 2022 up to and including 25th May 2022. The figures do not, however, reflect the time invested by the teams which is required to resolve each complaint/issue.

- 28 Customer Complaints were dealt with and closed out
- 3 Emergency Work Orders were received during the timeframe
- 423 Reactive Maintenance Work Orders were dealt with and closed out
- 3 Customer Asset Flooding Work Orders were received during the period
- 186 Service Requests (SRs) were raised for Field Requests and Follow On Work Orders for Reactive Maintenance work
- 42 Outage Notices were placed on the IW portal during the period. 31 were for unplanned burst water mains, booster pump repair, leak repair, reservoir interruption and hydrant replacement. 10 Communication notifications for water supply flushing and low water pressure and 1 planned outage for electricity power outage.

Water Operations

In the Mid Clare Area, outages occurred at the following locations:

- Sandfield, Ennis – Burst Watermain
- Newpark Road, Roslevan – Burst Watermain
- Castlerock Estate, Clarecastle – Burst Watermain
- Quin Road Industrial Estate Ennis – Burst Watermain
- Skehanagh Cross, Clarecastle – Burst Watermain
- Various leak repairs from SES – Tulla Road
- Claremount, Clarecastle – Burst Watermain
- Kilkeedy – Burst Watermain
- Remedial Action List upgrade ongoing in Corofin Water Treatment Plant.
- Ongoing Meter Installations/Replacements for Non Domestic Programme.
- Shareridge commenced O'Connell Square/Street Watermain replacement.
- Reservoir Cleaning programme ongoing – Carran & Crusheen complete.

In West Clare Area.

Major Outages for West Clare Area for period below:

- 18/5 Ahey Bridge 2inch OB
- 17/5 Derha Kilrush 6inch AC (asbestos cement)
- 16/5 Lisgreen Kilkee 9inch AC
- 13/5 Doonmore Bealaha 9 inch AC
- 5/5 Derha Kilrush 6 inch AC
- 3/5 Mountrivers 9 inch AC
- 1/5 Lisgreen Kilkee 9inch AC
- 29/4 Kilrush 6 inch AC
- 29/4 Coore 12 inch AC
- 20/4 Alava Cooraclare 9"AC- Burst Watermain
- 14/4 Bog road Lack West Kilmihill 2" pvc- Burst Watermain
- 13/4 Bog road No2 Lack West Kilmihill 2" pvc- Burst Watermain
- 12/4 Cahermurphy reservoir overflowing auto controller leak.
- 5/4 Moyne Court Kilrush 4" pvc. - Burst Watermain
- 3/4 Alva Cooraclare 9" AC. - Burst Watermain.

Major Outages for North Clare Area for period below:

- 21/5 Miltown Malbay
- 18/5 Station Road Lahinch
- 16/5 Fanore Pump failure
- 13/5 Liscannor Road burst Watermain
- 25/4 Miltown Burst Watermain.

RAL upgrade ongoing in New Doolough & Ballymacraven WTP

A number of outages occurred in the East Clare Area as follows: Major Outages for East Clare and Shannon Area for period below:

- Parkroe, Ardnacrusha – Burst Watermain
- Barry's Shop, Ardnacrusha – Burst Watermain
- Ard na Deirge, Killaloe – Burst Watermain
- Mills Tavern, O'Callaghans Mills – Burst Watermain
- Kilkishen x 2 – Burst Watermain
- Shannon Industrial Line x 3 – Burst Watermain
- Dromaan, Whitegate – Burst Watermain
- Fossa Beg, Scarriff – Burst Watermain
- Fergus Drive, Shannon – Burst Watermain
- L3056, Ardnacrusha – Burst Watermain
- Clarisford, Killaloe – Burst Watermain
- Finian Park, Shannon – Burst Watermain
- Parteen – Burst Watermain
- Feakle – Burst Watermain
- Kildoorus, O'Briens Bridge – Burst Watermain
- Shareridge continuing water rehabilitation works from Athlunkard Bridge to Larkins Cross – Outages for tie-ins
- Moygalla Reservoir – Emptying of reservoir cell for cleaning works
- Killaloe Step Testing.

Water Conservation

- Leak Detection Works – East Clare – Shannon, Newmarket
- Leak Detection Works – Mid Clare – Kilrush Road, Ashline, Clarecastle
- Leak Detection Works – North Clare – Acoustic Logger Installation – Kilfenora DMA & Kilshanny DMA & Lahinch DMA
- Fix Operation – Various locations – Kilfenora, Feakle, Broadford
- Larsens – Find crew – Tulla Road, Cloughleigh & Shannon Town DMA
- SES – Find crew – Killaloe DMA.

Wastewater Operations

Fencing works, topsoil stripping and pipe welding/joining works have commenced on the Killkee rising main project. The existing twin rising mains from the pumping station in Killkee have burst on occasion and caused disruption to water quality on the beach. By replacing the ageing rising mains with new and improved modern pipes this will greatly reduce this risk in future.

Upgrade works at the Clareabbey WWTP are ongoing with good progress made in the past month. All major structural concrete works for the new inlet tank have now been complete. The storm water tank has also commenced and is well underway with precast panels now in-situ. The new ESB substation is also nearing completion with the roof structure recently poured.

Irish Water Capital programme

Kilrush Wastewater Treatment Plant

The new scheme will comprise of a new wastewater treatment plant near Skagh Point, a new rising main, additional storm storage and upgrade of the existing Francis St pumping station. Construction works are ongoing at the site of the new WWTP. Primary settlement tanks have been installed and tested and the storm tank walls are in place. Construction of the Administration building commenced. At the Frances Street pump station site relocation of the overhead ESB line is awaited before excavation of the storm tank can proceed. Completion of the scheme is due in mid-2023.

When complete, this scheme will end the discharge of raw sewage to the sea near Skagh Point.



Clarecastle Sewerage Scheme

This scheme consists of a new pumping facility at Quay Road and new rising main from Quay Road to connect to the Clareabbey Wastewater Treatment Plant inlet. The pipeline from Quay Road to a point just north of the Church was constructed in an advance contract in February 2021.

Shareridge is the design/build Contractor and they have submitted the detailed design. The road opening licences have been applied for. Mobilisation commenced on 23rd May. Works are programmed to be substantially complete by the end of November.

When the inlet works are complete at Clareabbey WWTP the connection can be made from the rising main to the plant and then treatment of effluent from Clarecastle can commence. This project will end the discharge of raw sewage to the Fergus at the Quay in Clarecastle.

Liscannor Wastewater Treatment Plant

Construction of the Liscannor wastewater treatment plant and the new pumping station is on-going. The scheme will comprise of a new wastewater treatment plant at Corcomroe, a pumping station adjacent to John P Holland Park, rising main, gravity sewer and connection to the existing outfall. At the WWTP site the grading of access roads took place. Kerbs were installed. Platforms were installed at the storm tank and sludge tank. An attenuation drainage system was installed and grading of landscaped areas commenced. Kiosks were delivered to site and set in place. At the pump station area a temporary road closure is still in place along New Houses Road to facilitate the remaining pipeline works.

Completion of the scheme is due in early 2023. When complete, this scheme will end the discharge of raw sewage to the sea near the pier in Liscannor.

Ballyvaughan Wastewater Treatment Plant

A new wastewater treatment plant, pumping station including pipework extensions are proposed in Ballyvaughan. EPS is the Design/Build Contractor. Design work is ongoing. Preparation of the NIS and all required assessment reports are underway. A Landscape Architect has been appointed to the scheme. Following on from the planning process and planning approval, construction is anticipated to commence in late 2023 with completion in mid 2025.

Kilkee Wastewater Treatment Plant

A new wastewater treatment plant, pumping station and rising main are planned for Kilkee. EPS is the Design/Build Contractor. It is planned to continue the use of the existing sea outfall at Intrinsic Bay. Design of the treatment plant, pump station and rising mains is ongoing. Preparation of the NIS and all required assessment reports are underway. Following on from the planning process and planning approval, construction is anticipated to commence by Q3 of 2024 with completion in late 2025.

Ennistymon and Lahinch Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

The draft Feasibility Study Report and Site Selection Report investigate various options including locations for a new plant in each town or a new combined plant which would serve both towns. Costings for each option have been revised. The Feasibility Study Report and site selection report are being finalised by the Consultants working for Irish Water and a single site between Ennistymon and Lahinch is the recommended solution. Following approval of the Feasibility Study by Irish Water the next stage will be to further refine the site selection process to determine an exact preferred location for the new combined WWTP.

Newmarket on Fergus Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

It is proposed to construct a new pumped 400mm diameter rising main which would outfall to the Rine River thereby ceasing discharge of treated effluent from the existing wastewater treatment plant to the Lough Gash turlough. The NIS is being finalised. A Pre-Planning discussion was held in early May between Irish Water's Consultants and Clare CC Planners. It is anticipated that the planning application for the scheme will be lodged in July 2022.

Following planning approval construction is anticipated to commence in early 2023 and be completed by mid-2024.

Kilfenora Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

Aeration, RAS/WAS Pump station and clarifier tanks have been constructed and backfilling has taken place at these structures. Excavation has taken place for the additional storm storage tank and the base is prepared for installation of the tank. Three additional pump station structures have been installed. Archaeological monitoring has taken place at all excavations. The project is anticipated to be completed in mid-2023.

Remedial Action Lists Water Treatment Plant Upgrades

Ward and Burke Construction Ltd have been appointed by Irish Water to undertake the Clare Remedial Action List (RAL) Upgrade contract. The project includes for the upgrade of three plants currently on the Environmental Protection Agencies remedial action list.

1. New Doolough Water Treatment Plant – This plant is the regional treated water source for West Clare covering the large geographical area in the county and the third largest plant by volume produced. The project will modernise the treatment technology at the plant which will allow it to achieve the desired quality of output during events which cause high turbidity at the source. Works to upgrade filters numbers 3, 4, 5 and 6 have been completed with work coming to completion on filters 1 and 2. The sludge thickener and lamella clarifier construction has been completed. Installation of the new sludge press is currently underway. The intended completion date is August 2022.

2. Corofin Water Treatment Plant – this plant provides water to the town of Corofin. The project will modernise the treatment processes on site which will enable production of water to the desired standard during high turbidity events in the source lake. Works are nearing completion with the main treatment process now complete and ready for testing with the sludge handling process to be constructed in Phase 2 (May 2022 to August 2022) once the temporary plant is removed. Work is underway to finalise the SCADA and to detail the testing of the new equipment. Completion is expected by August 2022.

3. Ballymacraven Water Treatment Plant – this plant provides water to the North Clare Region, including Ennistymon, Lahinch, Lisdoonvarna, Doolin and Ballyvaughan. The project will modernise the treatment processes at the plant as well as bringing the plant production capacity to the required level. Design work is ongoing, and it is expected that construction will commence June/July 2022.

Rockmount Water Treatment Plant/Reservoir

These works involve the decommissioning of the existing water treatment tanks and installation of a new concrete storage reservoir and associated siteworks. The Rockmount area is supplied with treated water from the old Doolough Water Treatment plant and the existing Rockmount plant no longer operates. Additional storage capacity is required to provide network stability and quality of service. Construction of the reservoir base has commenced. The anticipated completion is Q3 2022.

Rehabilitation of Watermains

The following watermain rehabilitation projects are currently programmed:

1. Athlunkard Bridge to Larkins Cross, Athlunkard – replacement of 1,034m of 375/300mm trunk main with a 450mm diameter main is now complete.
2. Tullabrack to Gower, Kilrush – replacement of 1,847m of substandard 150mm main with 180mm diameter main is now complete.
3. Shannon Town, replacement of 300mm trunk main along edge of R471 at an Bóthar Mór – at design stage.
4. Lifford Road, Ennis – Installation of new main to replace backyard services – at design stage.

Clareabbey Wastewater Treatment Plant Inlet & Storm Tank Upgrade Works

Work at this location includes the construction of a new inlet works and screens, and a new storm tank. The inlet works will provide improved screening of materials coming into the plant to both protect and optimise the downstream treatment process to improve discharge standards. The stormwater tank will allow capture of flow during rainfall events for later treatment through the plant. The work will also involve the construction of a new ESB substation. The contractor has moved onto site and works have commenced with the inlet works walls now poured

and the base and wall of the storm tank under construction. The project is expected to be complete in Q1 2023.

Clonroadmore & Clareabbey Wastewater Treatment Plants

A project has commenced to examine the two wastewater treatment plants serving Ennis to ensure adequate capacity is available to cater for the future growth and development. The output of this stage of the project is a feasibility study report which will inform the decision on the most appropriate option to develop capacity in the plants. PE design reports have been completed and agreement sought from Irish Water asset planning to the figures as presented. The consultant will then proceed to prepare an options report for each plant.

Ennis Drainage Area Plan

This project involves the gathering of all available data on the wastewater network in Ennis and surveying and monitoring of flows in the network. This information will be used to build a hydraulic model of the network. The hydraulic model can be used to model future growth in the town and accurately identify where upsizing of pipework/pumping infrastructure might be required. It will also be used to identify where groundwater is infiltrating into the network adding unnecessary additional loading. It will allow Irish Water to have confidence in obtaining the best value for money on network improvement. The project is at tender assessment stage with study works commencing in 2022.

Asset Transfer

Following an assessment of the water and wastewater networks in County Clare, 378 sites have been identified for potential transfer to Irish Water to date. Following on site surveys, 58 of these assets have been determined to be non-operational assets which Irish Water will not accept. Of the remaining 320 assets, 208 have now been fully transferred or recommended for transfer to Irish Water.

The 112 assets remaining to be transferred are divided into the following four categories:

Report prepared / Pending/ Internal Query (15 assets) –

These consist of assets for which a report is being prepared or which need further investigation or information /approval from another council section to proceed. At present there are 21 assets under further query and 7 reports ready to issue to Irish Water.

National Special Projects Office (NSPO) (51 assets) – This is a department within Irish Water dealing with special projects which includes facilitating the Asset Transfers from Local Authorities- 13 assets are with the NSPO for agreement for transfer or to ascertain or if they are to be considered as underground assets. Underground assets are transferred by S.I. 13 of 2015. When they are approved Irish Water will issue a letter to Clare County Council confirming their approval.

Property Registration Authority Ireland (1 assets) – At present there are no assets submitted to the PRAI to be subdivided.

Outstanding assets to be reported on (45 assets) – These are 3rd Party/Unregistered assets. To transfer these, detailed searches through historical Councils records are required in order to submit to Irish Water for their consideration on the best approach to proceed with. Irish Water are now advocating that property in long term operational possession but not in the Council name be obtained by the adverse possession process. Circular L1 2022 has confirmed department support for this approach. All assets which have not yet transferred will be examined to see if they can be progressed using this method.

Rural Water Programme

The tender for the replacement of a section of 4km of the Ballycar Mains has been published and it is hoped to appoint a contractor for the works in June, pending final approval for funding from the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage. The connection of 7no houses to the Portdrine GWS, currently served by a private bored well, has also been issued for tender with a return date in early June. It is hoped to progress works in late June / July once all necessary licenses have been attained from the RMO and TII. The aforementioned works are all due to be completed under Measure 5 of the 2019-2021 Multi Annual Rural Water Programme with 100% funding allocation and subsequent transfer to the public network.

Notification of successful applications under the 2022-2024 Multi Annual Rural Water Programme by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage are still awaited. Engagement continues with GWS's wishing to progress works under the upcoming programme.

The Dough GWS (Spanish Point) was submitted by Clare County Council for taking in charge by Irish Water in May.

27 applications have been received to date in 2022 under the 'Grant for Improvement Works to a Private Water Supply'. The Rural Water Team continues to work with group water schemes to ensure their members have a robust and sustainable quality and quantity supply of water available to them.

The Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage have also announced a funding stream for "Measure A8 waste water collection and treatment needs for villages and settlements without access to public waste water services" under Circular L1/22 dated 28/4/22. This is a multi-annual programme which aims to provide the required infrastructure in unsewered towns and villages. Local authorities will need to complete a detailed application process and meet certain criteria to avail of the funding. A total of €50m of funding has been allocated over a 4 year period from 2022-2024 for the entire country. Each local authority can make 2 applications which must be submitted by mid September and projects will then be selected by the Department for the initial allocation of funding.

ENNIS MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Mayoral Reception

The Mayor of Ennis Municipal District, Cllr Ann Norton, and members of Clare County Council hosted a Mayoral Reception on May 6th, to honour local groups and individuals for their outstanding achievements. Those honoured included:

THE ENNIS TRACK UNDER-20S TEAM, who won the 2022 Junior Men's European Club Cross Country Championship (ECCC) title.



ALANA MCINERNEY, on being selected on the Irish Women's Rugby Squad.



ENNIS BRASS BAND, 2021 was a milestone year for Ennis Brass Band, marking the 50th anniversary of the band's formation.



TONY BUTLER, ETHAN COUGHLAN AND CONOR MOLONEY, on being selected on the Irish Rugby Team that won the 2022 Under-20 Six Nations Championship. President of Ennis RFC Dermot Hallahan accepted the certificate of achievement on behalf of Tony, Ethan and Conor. A very sociable evening was enjoyed by all, recipients were joined by coaches and family members in the Civic Room for presentations, photos and refreshments.

Roadworks Programme

Road recycling and surface dressing for the 2022 roadworks programme has commenced in the Ennis MD area. Council crews are carrying out preparation works and traffic management in addition to roadworks and surfacing with the assistance of the roadworks contractor. It is expected that the restoration improvement programme will continue in Ennis for the next few weeks.



Street Cleaning and Traffic Management

Following two weekends with capacity crowds at Cusack Park, Ennis MD outdoor cleaning crew ensured the town was returned to normal state, presentable for locals, visitors and businesses. The team also put in huge effort around the St Flannan's College area in advance of the Ennis Tidy Towns celebration at the end of May. The MD liaised closely with An Garda Síochána in compiling a Traffic Management Plan to ensure a clean flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic during these weekends while maintaining access for shoppers and local businesses.



Ennis Public Realm

The signs 'SHARED SPACE' are being erected following the public realm works on Parnell Street. These signs are being introduced to alert all road users that the environment they are approaching is substantially different to a typically urban road carriageway, it is a shared surface between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicular traffic.



Celebration Day with President Michael D Higgins



Ennis' success in the 2021 National SuperValu Tidy Towns Competition was celebrated at St Flannan's College on May 28th with guest of honour President of Ireland Michael D Higgins. Ennis Tidy Towns organised the successful event with support from Ennis MD and Council volunteers, Civil Defence, St Flannan's College with direction from the Department of Rural and Community Development. Director of Service, Carmel Kirby, was the MC and extended a very warm welcome to the President, locals and visitors. She

acknowledged the community and statutory groups who work collaboratively to make Ennis a great place to work, live and visit. The event was attended by over 320 guests. The President spoke for over 20 minutes, reflecting on his time in St Flannan's, the progressive nature of the Tidy Towns organisation and the fact that it takes years of work and different committees to get to this celebration day. The work of Ennis Tidy Towns and the celebration featured on *Nationwide* on RTÉ One on May 30th.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

SOCIAL DIRECTORATE

The summer season with exam weather is upon us which means nearly half the year has passed and at this stage it seems Covid-19 is behind us as society has moved on too.

A level of acceptance has crept in in relation to the Ukrainian crisis, however there is sustained demand for accommodation for displaced Ukrainians with ~2,300 Ukrainians placed in emergency accommodation in the county. The cross-directorate team co-ordinating the agencies and supports are working diligently to deal with the issues presenting for those placed in emergency accommodation in Clare. The Housing team commenced inspections of pledged properties during May to seek to secure longer term accommodation for those in emergency accommodation.

HOUSING

The team attended the first in-person Housing Conference since 2019 which was very focused on delivery of social housing to meet the targets of Housing for All. In the spirit of delivery and following intense negotiations the contract for 61 turnkey social housing units was signed in late May. These units are to be advertised on CBL in phases.

The usual business of housing continues at pace with the housing public counter open to the public without appointment from 9am until 1pm and by appointment after 1pm. Customers who require appointments in the afternoon can call 065 6846334 or 065 6849403 to schedule same.

Housing need as of 31/05/2022:

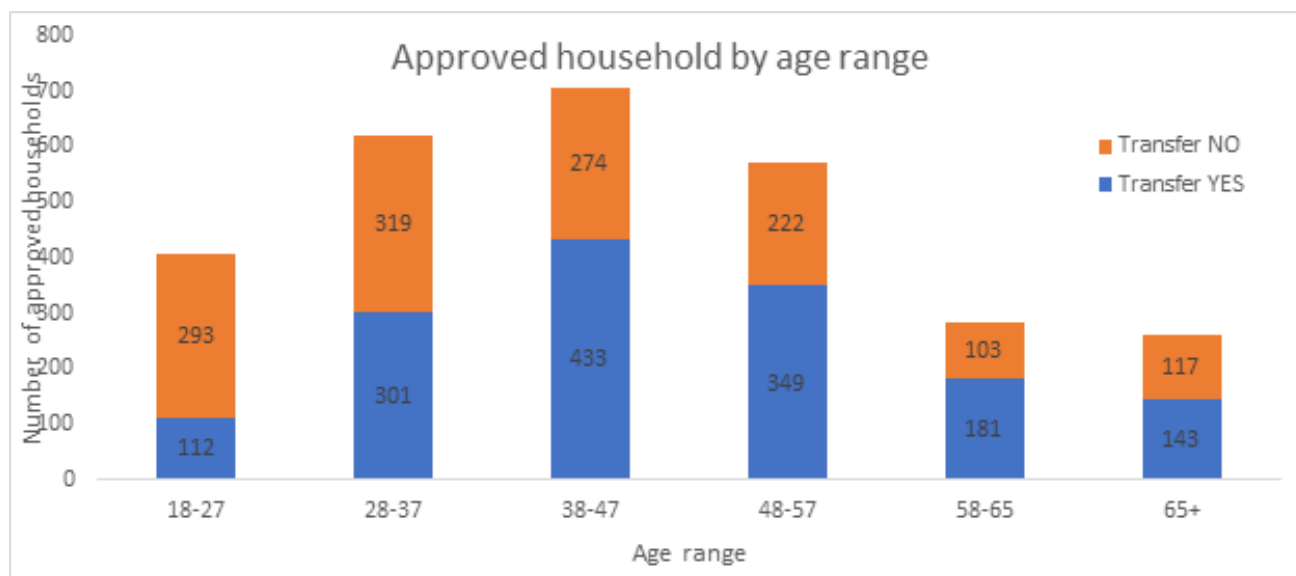


Housing need by Area of choice and number of beds approved:

FIRST AREA OF CHOICE (only)	BEDS_APPROVED					Grand Total
	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	5 bed	
CLARECASTLE		133	29	10	1	173
CLONLARA		17	5	2		24
COORACLARE/DOONBEG	2	37	10	1		50
COROFIN/RUAN		53	21	3		77
ENNIS	6	916	185	67	3	1177
ENNISTYMON/LAHINCH	1	113	25	5		144
FEAKLE/SCARIFF/WHITEGATE	1	135	28	4		168
KILDYSART/BALLYNACALLY		24	3	2		29
KILFENORA		6	2			8
KILKEE/CROSS/CARRIGAHOLT		69	11	1		81
KILLALOE		57	9	3		69
KILMALEY		10	3			13
KILMIHIL		9	7	3		19
KILRUSH		96	32	7		135
LISDOONVARNA/BALLYVAUGHAN		38	10	3		51
MEELICK/PARTEEN/WESTBURY		77	35	10		122
MILTOWN MALBAY/MULLAGH/QUILTY		70	12	7		89

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

NEWMARKET-ON-FERGUS		58	14	4		76
QUIN		16	8	1		25
SHANNON		182	25	14		221
SIXMILEBRIDGE		35	5	8		48
TULLA/KILKISHEN/BROADFORD		40	7	1		48
Grand Total	10	2191	486	156	4	2847



Housing allocations

The allocations team has experienced a very busy month as the housing units in Tulla (25) and Ashline (40) were advertised on CBL. Demand for these schemes was significant with in excess of 200 bids on individual properties within the schemes. The team shortlisted and interviewed those who expressed bids in line with the Council's Allocation Scheme and letters of offers have issued to households who are being offered tenancies in these schemes.

Offers issued from (21.04.2022 to 23.05.2022)	13
Offers refused	1
Tenancies signed up	14
Tenancies terminated	11

Housing Tenancies

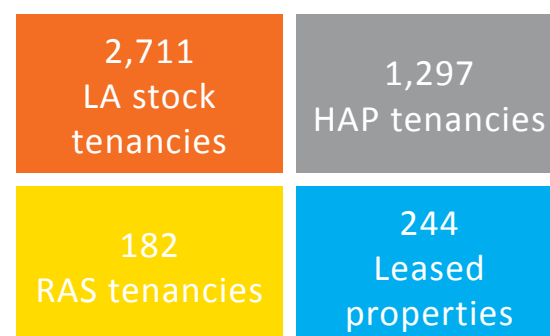
*Breakdown of tenancies by Municipal District (including RAS; long- and short-term leasing; Traveller accommodation & Mortgage to Rent):

Municipal District	PROPERTY STATUS			Total
	Allocated	Occupied	Vacant	
Ennis MD	20	1180	27	1227
Killaloe MD	16	377	10	403
West Clare MD	3	925	44	972
Shannon MD	2	680	10	692
Grand Total	41	3162	91*	3294

Vacant Stock*	Ennis MD	West Clare MD	Shannon MD	Killaloe MD
Traveller accommodation	4	6	3	0
Derelict properties	0	2	0	1
Projects	1	6	0	0
Casual vacancies	22	30	7	9
TOTAL	27	44	10	10

Average cost of returning casual vacancies to stock in May was €40,259 with an average vacancy period of 129 days.

Tenancies



Estate Management

The Tenancy Enforcement Team continue to undertake regular routine and response calls to tenants to manage and mitigate against complaints of antisocial behaviour.

	May 22	Total year to date
TEO Call Outs	505	2,901

Any matters that need to be brought to the attention of the Estate Management unit can be done so by emailing asb@clarecoco.ie. The working hours of the TEO team are flexible to meet required need, involving working after hours and weekends as the need dictates. The TEO team can be contacted out of office hours, should the need arise, by contacting the Council Emergency Phone no. (087) 4169496.

Private Rented inspections

Work to achieve the target for private rented inspections (1,025) has accelerated in May with 14 Virtual and 82 Physical undertaken. This is in line with the work programme set out to ensure target inspection numbers are achieved. The team are following up where properties do not meet the minimum rented standard however it should be noted the most frequent areas of noncompliance are window latches, absence of fire blankets and other items which are readily and quickly resolved by the landlords.

Housing Grants

Grants Approved for May 2022:

Grant type	Number of approvals	Value of works €
Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability	2	11,000
Housing Aid for Older People	10	41,485
Mobility Aids Grant	14	56,448
Total	26	108,953

Local Authority Home Loan

Full details on the Local Authority Home Loan (LAHL) and eligibility criteria including the Loan Calculator and Information Booklet can be found on www.localauthorityhomeloan.ie



Homeless

The Clare Homeless Action Team (HAT) office is open by appointment during office hours and can be contacted on **065 684 6291**.

The service remains at capacity with access to private emergency accommodation further impacted by the demand for accommodation of this nature.

Clare HAT continue our focus on exits from homeless services and during the period 21st April 2022 to 19th May 2022: 5 households exited from homeless services, 2 to Local Authority own door and 2 discharged and 1 returned to family.

Homeless presentations from 21st April, 2022 to 19th May, 2022:

New presentations	30
Repeat presentations	162
Total Presentations	192

Status as of 19th May, 2022

	Families	Adults	Dependents	Providers
Laurel Lodge	0	13	0	1
Cusack Lodge	5	5	10	1
Westbrook	0	16	0	1
Ashford Court	10	16	18	1
EA Families	3	3	5	2
EA Individuals	0	5	0	4
TOTAL	18	58	33	10

Ukrainian accommodation response

The Housing team are extensively involved in the accommodation response for displaced Ukrainians. The numbers placed in emergency accommodation in the County continues to grow however the focus is shifting from emergency accommodation to longer term own door accommodation. To that end the team are inspecting and co-ordinating the pledged accommodation. To date 7 suitable vacant properties have been referred for allocating to displaced Ukrainians with the programme of inspections continuing. The Council has engaged Mid West Simon to oversee the allocations of these properties based on their experience and interactions with those in emergency accommodation centres.

Vacant properties

Vacant properties remain a valid mechanism to meet competing housing needs. The team continues to work through the list of properties with a view to bringing the unit back into use as either social housing or for sale to the private market. A number of properties are now the subject of CPOs as all other attempts to address the dereliction were unsuccessful.

	Owner Engagement	Site Inspections	Website entries
Ennis	1		1
Killaloe	1	25	1
West Clare	22	0	1
Shannon			1
TOTAL	24	25	4

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The public are encouraged to register vacant properties on the website www.vacanthomes.ie Properties registered on this website are investigated and assessed for suitability for redevelopment/purchase.

To address dereliction and improve the appearance of towns/villages the Council are pursuing the purchase of older vacant properties under the Buy and Renew Scheme.

Status as at 27/05/2022

	In Negotiations	Sale Agreed	Tender Stage/Works in Progress
Ennis		2	
Killaloe			
West Clare	8	3	3
Shannon			

Defective Concrete Blocks

The Council submitted a comprehensive response to the Department of Housing during May. The submission proves that reactive pyrite is present in blockwork in Clare and is the cause of the damage to the properties tested. The Council are confident the submission will ensure the inclusion of Clare in the Defective Concrete Block redress scheme. The elected members, Oireachtas members and the Clare Pyrite Action Group are regularly updated on developments.

Update on capital programme

SHIP Capital	No. approved	Current stage	Start Date	Completion Date
Shauntraud Woods, Killaloe	4	Complete and allocated	-	Q1 2022
Newmarket on Fergus	18	Complete and allocated	Q3 2020	Q1 2022
Ashline, Ennis	40	Under Construction.	Q3 2020	Q2 2022
Milltown Malbay	27	Under Construction.	Q4 2020	Q3 2022
Tulla	25	Under Construction.	Q4 2020	Q2 2022
Roslevan, Tulla Rd.	8	Under Construction.	Q4 2021	Q4 2022
Scarriff	18	Part VIII Approved. Preparation of Stage 3 ongoing.	Q2 2022	Q3 2023
Doonbeg Lands	8	Stage 2 approved by DHLGH. Part VIII has been quashed by the High Court – awaiting the formal High Court order.	Q4 2022	Q4 2023
Clarecastle	2	Stage 1-3 application in progress and will issue to DHLGH.	Q3 2022	Q3 2023
Drumcliff Rd. Ennis	26	Stage 2 approved by DHLGH. Part VIII Withdrawn. Determination issued to ABP and awaiting outcome.	Q4 2022	Q1 2024
Sixmilebridge	15	Stage 2 approved by DHLGH. Preparation of Stage 3 underway.	Q3 2022	Q4 2023
Ennistymon	30	Stage 1 approved by DHLGH. Preparation for Stage 2 underway.	Q4 2022	Q2 2024
Gort Rd. Ennis	20	Stage 1 approved. Preparation of Stage 2 underway.	Q2 2023	Q3 2024
Ballaghboy, Quin Road, Ennis (TA)	5	Stage 1 approved by DHPLG. CENA appointed to support project development.	Q3 2022	Q3 2023
Cluain Gréine, Lifford, Ennis	61	Turnkey acquisition contract signed 30/5/22 Phase 1 complete.	-	Q4 2022

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Main Street, Mounttshannon	4	Turnkey acquisition contract signed	-	Q2 2022
Subtotal	311			
Bruachlan, Westbury (CoOperative Housing Ireland)	22	CALF - Property transfer complete, reapply for planning permission	Q2 2022	Q4 2023
Ballymacaula, Ennis (Cluid)	2	Part V – Completed. Sale closed 15th February 2022.	Q3 2020	Q1 2022
Limerick Road, Ennis (Cluid Housing Assoc)	24	CALF Acquisition – Under construction 9 to be delivered Q4 2022 15 to be delivered Q3 2023	Q4 2021 Q3 2022	Q4 2022 Q3 2023
Roslevan, Tulla Road, Ennis (CoOperative Housing Ireland)	55	CALF Turnkey (14 units delivered in Q4 2021) 15 units to be delivered in Q1 2022 40 units to be delivered in Q4 2022	Q2 2021 Q4 2021	Q1 2022 Q3 2022
Limerick Road, Ennis (Inis Housing)	18	CALF Turnkey – construction in progress	Q1 2022	Q2 2023
Market Street, Ennis (Peter McVerry Trust)	14	CAS Turnkey – Department approval received	Q1 2022	Q1 2023
Cluain na Laoi, Kilkishen	16	CALF Turnkey – Department approved 6 units to be delivered in Q1 2023 10 units to be delivered in Q4 2023	Q2 2022 Q3 2022	Q1 2023 Q4 2023
Subtotal	151			
Total	462			

SPORTS & RECREATION

Active Ennis Leisure Complex



The facility hosted the Community Games Parish Swimming Finals from the 16th – 20th May with each Parish represented. The winners qualify for the Clare Community games in finals on 10th June.

The schools swimming programme is at capacity with 18 primary schools filling the timetable to the end June.

The summer intensive swim lessons and camps are currently advertised and available for booking. Demand is strong for these programmes and the positions will be filled on a first come first served basis.

Routine and response maintenance of the facility were undertaken during May.

Active Ennis Tim Smythe Park, Active Ennis John O’Sullivan Park, Lees Road, Active Kilrush Sports Complex & Active Ennis, Cloughleigh.

The ongoing essential Pitch Maintenance Programme is scheduled for early June, this activity will impact on pitch availability. ‘Green Flag’ applications were submitted for John O’Sullivan Park, Lees Rd and Tim Smythe Park.

Pitch activity is cyclical with an increased demand for GAA activities as senior soccer and rugby season finish for 2022, it should be noted junior soccer season is in full swing and will continue to September.

To ensure standards are maintained the playground and ancillary facilities were audited by an external auditor with any issues identified actioned.

All clubs and patrons are requested to leave facilities as they find them.

Any operational issues or queries can be reported by email to info@activeennis.ie

All sporting activities are welcome at these facilities with pre-booking essential on www.activeennis.ie

Clare Local Sports Partnership



Primary Schools

- Over 500 primary school children from 3rd – 6th class took part in our 3-day Indoor Sports hall Athletics County Finals Competition. It was a fantastic event where children from 9 primary schools across the county competed in both track and field events in Corofin hall.

Post-primary schools

- In conjunction with Tug of War Ireland, we organized the first ever Clare Schools TY Tug of War competition, that took place in St. Anne’s community college in Killaloe on Monday. The competition saw over 50 TYs from the school take part and there were gold, silver and bronze medalists from each of the 3 competition categories.

Community Youth

- Our beginner teen boys programme finished in K FITT gym in Kilrush. This programme saw 12 boys between the ages of 14-18 years; learn the basics of lifting in a gym setting. They enjoyed the programme so much that they themselves have paid a reduced fee to continue the programme for another 6 weeks with the Tutor.

CULTURAL SERVICES - LIBRARY, ARTS, MUSEUM & ARCHIVES

Clare County Library

Deliveries continue post-Covid with 59 deliveries made to housebound library members this month.

Online Resources usage for the month – patterns remain similar to previous months

1,211 E-Books	2,122 E-Audiobooks	513 E-Magazines
61 Online courses	2007 Press Reader	62 Transparent Languages

Right to Read

Spring into Storytime activities ended in Library branches on the 12th of May with a monster online story and drawing session with 28 primary schools in the county taking part. Approx. 900 children joined the activities from their classrooms, the session ending with a step-by-step draw-along of the characters from selected stories. Barking Dog Theatre brought their show “Teddy’s Day Out” to Ennistymon and Miltown Malbay libraries. Junior and Senior Infants from local schools were highly entertained by their stories and songs. The show which included elements of theatre, puppetry and mime was a further celebration of the Spring into Storytime programme.

Children’s picture books in Ukrainian were purchased by the library service and will be available for borrowing in branch libraries from May onwards.

Marketing

Social media stats for the month.

	New Followers	Total Followers	No of Posts	Likes	Shares/Retweets/Reach	Comments
	82	5686	65	321	1615	11
	1	2017	36	118	40	0
	23	1643	61	438	7659	116

Creative Ireland

The official launch of Cruinniú na nÓg 2022 took place on Tuesday, 3rd May. Cruinniú na nÓg is a national day of free creativity for young people that takes place on 11th June. Clare Creative Ireland has a full programme of events for Cruinniú this year, including workshops and performances in arts, craft, theatre, printing, dance, music, filmmaking and coding. There are 29 events spread across the county, which are free and can be booked through the Cruinniú na nÓg website.

Events funded by the Creative Ireland Clare Project Awards fund have been gathering momentum as the year progresses. The Project Award enables communities to bring culture and creativity to the furthest reaches of County Clare. Lahinch celebrated the 30th anniversary of the twinning with Arzon in Brittany and Scariff Community College announced the Edna O’Brien Award for Creative Writing, all funded by the Project Awards fund.

Total number of live events	85
Total number of online events	2
Total attendances at live events	685
Total attendances at online events	13
Total number of outreach visits	3
Total attendance at outreach visits	63



Barking Dog Theatre in Ennistymon Library.



Craft class in Kilkee Library with LCETB.

Healthy Ireland

Two Healthy Ireland in-branch events took place this month.

On Thursday, 12th May, Irish Yoga Association teacher, Trish Cleary, facilitated a Chair Yoga class in Newmarket on Fergus Library. The class includes music that takes participants on a trip down memory lane with Doris Day and Andy Williams. On Monday, 23rd May, Yoga instructor Colette Nagle facilitated a Yoga class for Mothers & Babies in Miltown Malbay Library. Participants of the local Mother and Baby group attended this taster session.

Decade of Centenaries

The West Clare War of Independence Committee launched their booklet "Commemorating the War of Independence in West Clare". This compilation contains historical pieces from the 17 commemorative events held in the West Clare Brigade area in 2020/21. The Glenwood Ambush Commemorative Committee have also produced an updated edition of their work on the Glenwood Ambush. Copies of both publications have been distributed to branches of Clare County Library and local schools. Inis Cathaigh Comhaltas held a Remembrance concert in Teach Ceoil, Kilrush to commemorate local historical events and songs of the revolutionary period. An event to commemorate Nan Hogan (teacher and leading member of Cumann na mBan) took place in Cratloe National School on 20th May with a talk by Martin Bourke. A performance of "Six Days", a spoken word and music production by Frank Shouldice based around the Easter Rising, took place in glór on Saturday, 21st May. All projects have been funded by the Decade of Centenaries Clare programme.

Clare Archives

A segment of the Barrett Papers has been received by Archives. This part of the collection (once cleaned, catalogued, and appropriately housed) will be digitised thanks to a grant received from Decade of Centenaries funding.

Each month the Archives Service continues to deal with queries from the public wishing to view material in the local studies library from the archives' collection. Our Lady's Hospital continues to have queries each month.

A grant has been received by the County Archives in partnership with Kilrush and District Historical Society from the Heritage Council to enable the Barrett Papers (of approximately 300 boxes) to be properly stored in media such as acid free/lignin free boxes and folders appropriate for these records of enduring value. Work will begin on rehousing this collection in Kilrush once the preservation material has been delivered. This project will take at least four months to complete.

Clare Arts Office

HOUSE! produced by Fidget Feet and commissioned by Clare County Council toured to Athenry, County Galway and Limerick Racecourse as part of Riverfest. A symposium on the event was held in UL.



ECO Showboat in Killaloe.

The ECO Showboat sailed up the Shannon and held art/eco events in Killaloe and Scariff. This is a nationally backed arts and ecological initiative funded by Creative Ireland.

Culturlann Sweeney held a film club screening and the launch of the “Duala III” collaboration with the Irish Traditional Music Archive took place there. “Amhráin an Chláir”, rediscovered songs as gaeilge from and about Clare, is now hosted on the Clare Library website. The Live Local Performance Scheme events started with music events taking place in the 12 O’Clock Hills, Ballynacally, Doolin, Ennistymon, Kilkee, Kilrush, Lahinch and Tulla. Veerle Clays (Cloonanaha), Evelyn Sorohan (Ennis CBS) David O’Rourke (Kildysart NS) Rachel McManus (St. Anne’s School, Ennis) and Fiona Linnane (Scoil Christ Ri, Ennis) completed their Artist in Schools residency.

The Visual Voices programme continued with workshops with the Alzheimer’s Society, St. Joseph’s Hospital, Ennis and Raheen Day Care Centre. Three exhibitions also took place in Kilkee, Ennis and Scariff. David Balfe completed an Arts and Disability project with the Dulick Centre, Ennis the results of which featured in the Embrace Arts and Disability Exhibition which took place in glór along with a ‘hooley’ with over 200 people, many with disabilities, in attendance. A research project, “See Change”, comprising of an audit of arts and disability activity in Clare, Galway City and Mayo began.

Clare Youth Theatre performed “Wonderland, A Twisted Tale” in glór, a piece devised by the young people exploring coercive behaviours. The Riches of Clare concert series started during the Fleadh Nua. The digital training course for artists was completed and Gerry O’Mahony, a visual artist from Clonlara, was awarded the Tyrone Guthrie Bursary. Poet Grace Wells from

Ennistymon was awarded the Platform 31 award. Assistance was given to 6 production companies on a variety of film shoots from fashion shoots to TV Dramas in May.

The Arts Office presented on the work of the Arts Office to the Probus group in Ennis.

Social media stats – the Arts Office posted 157 times across social media platforms achieving 570 reactions and reaching 6442 with 1279 engagements.

Clare Museum

The curator issued a press release seeking donations of objects in keeping with the Collection Policy of ‘actively collecting’ to encourage donations of items. Ten social media posts were made on facebook featuring objects from the Museum collection.

There was an article in the Clare Champion about Clare Museum’s Creative Ireland project. A total of 17 people have volunteered for the CI project which involves the excavation of a famine-era house. The excavation is scheduled to be completed on 11th and 12th June. The text panels for the de Valera car exhibition are being finalised.

The museum is working with procurement to ensure the fair selection of a company to design the museum website. Work should proceed on this project in the coming month and needs to be completed by mid-October. Visitor numbers to the Museum are increasing with 107 visitors on one day alone in April and recent days in May attracting 80 visitors daily as tourist numbers return. The Tourist Office will reopen shortly.

KILLALOE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Schedule of Municipal District Works 2022

Works are continuing in the delivery of the SMDW 2022. Road improvement works were completed at the following locations:

- Asphaltic concrete overlay at Merriman Court, Flagmount
- Stone Overlay on the L-7186 Old Ballycar road
- Stone Overlay on the L-3042 Sallybank
- Stone Overlay on the L-8022 Slieveanore
- Stone Overlay on the L-8018 Dooglaun.

Currently, preparation works are ongoing for the commencement of the Surface Dressing programme. In addition to preparatory works for the Community Involvement Scheme roads throughout the MD.

Lagan Asphalt will be carrying out the Asphaltic Concrete overlay contract on the Regional Roads in the MD. Works on this contract will commence in late Q2.

Low Cost Safety Scheme

The safety Improvement works at O’Briensbridge/ Bridgetown junction are now complete. This junction had historically a number of safety issues. The works carried out by Clare County Council in relation to sightlines at this location have radically improved both driver and pedestrian safety at the location.

Ballycuggeran

As the tourist season begins, we welcome the additional resource appointed to assist in the management of Ballycuggeran Twomilegate for this summer season. The role of Beach operative will run throughout the holiday season ensuring that the amenity is maintained to a high standard while providing assistance and information to holiday makers.

Activity relating to the Aquapark at Ballycuggeran commenced in May 2022.

Active Travel 2022 Summary: Killaloe MD Programme

Project	Status
Tulla footpath remediation	Works ongoing
Tulla connection to athletics grounds	Project commencing June 2022
Droomindoora	At tender stage
Quin	Works complete
Clarisford Park Connection	At Tender stage
Kilmurry Pedestrian Crossing and Footpaths	Works Complete

Safety works at O Briansbridge – April 22



Kilbane Junction works



PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Shannon Estuary Taskforce

The local government sector is now represented on the Government's Estuary Taskforce which has met twice in May 2022. This Council will present to the Taskforce on the potential to develop the off-shore wind energy off the Co. Clare/Mid West coast. The sustainable use of our maritime assets by providing a green energy solution for Ireland and the EU is one of the key functions of the Taskforce. Needs identified include the development of an offshore renewable energy marshalling facility to deploy floating wind projects by 2028 and the creation of a supply chain enterprise hub on the Shannon Estuary.

Film Production in Clare

The collaboration with and support given by Clare County Council to the Regional Film Office (Mid-West) has proven to be very worthwhile and there is noticeable increase in activity in films and short series being filmed and produced in Clare. The Arts Officer and the Property Management Unit are regularly involved with film producers and location managers to assist where possible in finding suitable location and premises to meet their needs. The economic boost from such activity across the County is considerable.

New Regional Aid Map for Ireland

Regional Aid is an EU policy and the areas that attract regional aid allow the Member State to support investments in enabling infrastructure, employment grants, etc. These areas are continually being reduced in developed countries such as Ireland, with regional aid being transferred to new EU countries and less developed regions. The new Irish Regional Aid Map covers the period 2022 – 2027 and has implications for enterprise investment in that areas excluded from the map become ineligible for regional aid (see map below*).

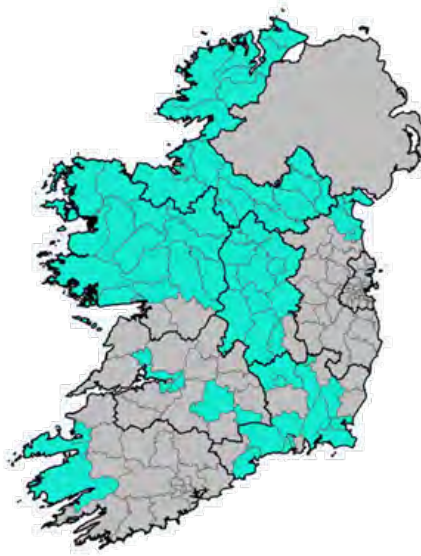
In this regard, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment are tasked with the preparation of a new regional aid map for Ireland and the Mid-West region. Clare County Council in conjunction with the other local authorities of the Mid West i.e. Limerick and Tipperary, made a submission to the above Department in respect of the preparation of a new Regional Aid Map for Ireland. The Mid West submission raised several concerns not least the fact that only 39% of the region can now offer regional aid for inward investment purposes. The submission also raised concerns over the lack of consultation with local authorities in the preparation of the new Regional Aid Map for the Mid West. It highlighted the fact that local authorities are large landowners of land and property zoned for development in their respective counties and expressed disappointment that the significant development potential of these

lands was not given proper consideration nor was the role of the local authorities in promoting economic development when the Department was finalizing the new regional aid map. The implications of the new Regional Aid Map on economic development promotion within the three counties was also raised. Also highlighted was the fact that the Mid-West has the highest concentration of unemployment blackspots in the country and that the presence of unemployment blackspots was not accounted for in any of the selection criteria for the new regional aid map. Also highlighted was that many Mid-West local electoral areas (LEAs) excluded from the new Regional Aid Map suffer from long term high unemployment such as Kilrush, Co. Clare; Limerick City North and Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Tipperary and the submission raised the fact that the omission of such LEAs as these is firmly at odds with the purpose and spirit of regional aid. The new Regional Aid Map now places 13 out of 19 of our LEAs, covering 61% of the population, at a further disadvantage when trying to attract valuable investments and jobs.

Regional Aid Overview*

- Regional Aid governs where the State can support investment enterprise and is a key influencer in locations' attractiveness
- It allows aid to support company investment in infrastructure, employment grants, etc
- If the project is located outside of the designated areas, the project will not be eligible for Regional Investment Aid (although other aid is available in R&D, environmental and training grants and projects <€200k over 3 years still ok under de minimis)
- The rules cover IDA companies, EI companies, tourism investment, basically anywhere a private company will be investing and is looking for State support
- D/Enterprise with IDA, EI and Udaras developed the new Irish Map for 2022 – 2027 and submitted to Commission. IDA seen to have a strong role to play in this, particularly with regards to high scoring of their existing landholdings and strategic prioritisation
- Grants allowable vary by size of company – new rules say:
 - Up to 15% for large companies – e.g. new IDA investors. Not huge but a significant competitive consideration.
 - Up to 25% for medium companies
 - Up to 35% for small companies.

Below is the Regional Aid Map 2022 - 2027 which has been approved by the EU Commission and the areas in green is where new regional aid applies.



STRATEGIC ECONOMIC INITIATIVES (SEI)

Kilrush Maritime Training Centre

The project awaits the outcome of the RRDF Category 1 application in terms of funding for the establishment of a Maritime Training Centre in Kilrush. Consultancy Gavin & Doherty Geosolutions (GDG) has been commissioned by Wind Energy Ireland to undertake a study of Ireland's national ports ahead of buildout of offshore wind. The assessment will seek to clarify the current position, as well as identifying the strategic port development opportunities for the future where relevant. The study, funded by Belfast Harbour, DP Energy, ESB, Inis Offshore Wind, Orsted and RWE Renewables, will focus on enabling both fixed-bottom and floating offshore wind projects to be facilitated from Irish ports and the SEI team will feed into any call for input. The output of the study will be a report that documents the anticipated industry requirements for the construction of offshore renewable energy projects and assesses these needs against existing, and likely, available port infrastructure at a range of Irish ports including those on the Shannon Estuary. There are relatively few port locations that could support the offshore wind industry and those suitable will need to be benchmarked against up-to-date criteria, according to GDG. To ensure a robust long-term offshore wind sector, it is imperative that a local supply-chain is developed to service the industry which will ultimately include the provision of maritime safety training as is being proposed for at the Kilrush Maritime Safety Training Centre.

Shannon Town Masterplan / One Shannon Hub

The project delivery of the Shannon Civic and Community Hub commenced in February and continues with preparation of background work and research.

The preparation of a URDF application which is key to the funding of a number of interventions proposed in the masterplan and works on this is continuing.

Work on the design brief for the proposed building and the associated enhanced public realm is being carried out by BDP Architects. The purpose of the design brief is to establish the future needs for the area and for the people of Shannon, and to develop a range of opportunities for consideration and assessment that will lead to robust recommendations in terms of the overall design, function and layout of the proposed new building, and enhanced public realm.

Roche Masterplan

Work continues on the preparation of the Roche Masterplan in collaboration with Roche Ireland and OMP. Detailed work on SEA and HDA scoping continues.

FORWARD PLANNING

Sixmilebridge Town Centre Masterplan

In December 2021, the Minister for Rural and Community Development announced funding to deliver the first ever Town Centre First Plans to tackle dereliction and revitalising town centres, and Sixmilebridge was one of the first 26 towns selected under this initiative

Funding of €100,000 was allocated to Clare County Council to prepare a Town Centre Masterplan for Sixmilebridge town centre and immediate surrounds which will provide a vision for the development of the town, include a detailed study of the area and identify key projects/actions which will revitalise the town centre e.g. refurbishment/repurposing of vacant and/or derelict buildings, development of key underutilised town centre sites, traffic management, place-making etc. The Masterplan will be key to leveraging funding from multiple funding streams, including RRDF and Town & Village Renewal Scheme as it will provide a co-ordinated programme of investment for the town into the future. It is hoped that consultants will be appointed in the coming weeks to progress the preparation of the Masterplan.

Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029



The public consultation process for the Draft Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029 closed on 28th March, with a total of 1,013 submissions received. This level of public submissions and interest compares with that of larger City authorities and follows an extensive public consultation campaign carried out since the consultation commenced on 10th December 2021 with nine dedicated public consultation events around the County. Since the closing date, all submissions are being reviewed and the preparation of the Chief Executive's Report is in progress. Upon finalisation, the Chief Executive's report will be issued to the Elected Members for their consideration

in early July 2022 which be followed by a series of workshops beginning the end of July.

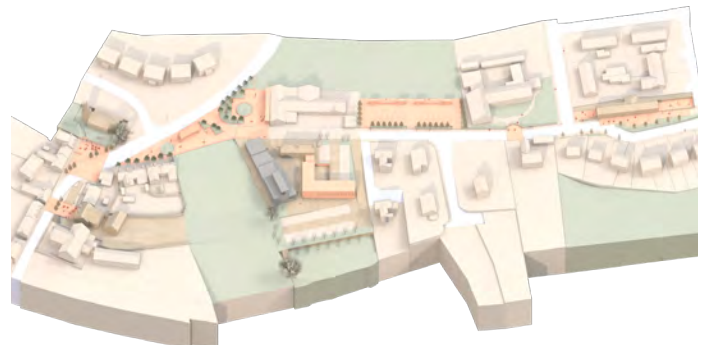
Ennistymon Enhancement Plan

Clare County Council, together with its partners Clare Local Development Company and Ennistymon Town Team, and the design team led by Helena McElmeel Architects continued work on the preparation of the Ennistymon Enhancement plan in May. The design team are currently in the second stage of the design process which is heavily informed by the outcomes and observations obtained from both stages of the public consultation process. The steering group met with the design team in May to discuss their progress.



Corofin Enhancement Strategy

Clare County Council and National Parks & Wildlife Services (NPWS) continued in their partnership to prepare an Enhancement strategy for the village of Corofin. The steering group met with the design team in May, where they gave an update on their progress. The first stage of the design process will continue into June.



FORWARD PLANNING

The Manchester Martyrs Monument

The Manchester Martyrs Monument in Kilrush is being repaired and restored with grant aid from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage under the Historic Structures Fund. The repair and cleaning of the stonework has progressed significantly in May and will be finalised by late-summer 2022.

Flexible Outdoor Structures

Clare County Council has received funding under the Outdoor Public Space Scheme as promoted by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. This funding stream asks us to reimagine how we use our outdoor public spaces. The Council together with GKMP Architects undertook targeted consultation in May, and the feedback received from key stakeholders will be integrated into the next stage of the design process. The picture (below, right) shows an image of one of the possible designs.

Hastings' Farmhouse, Shannon

Clare County Council and Dúchas na Sionna have been successful in their funding application to the Heritage Stewardship Fund as promoted by The Heritage Council. The application focussed on Hastings Farmhouse in Shannon, a protected structure and a rare building type of historic and architectural significance. The Heritage Stewardship Fund looks to provide support to bodies who have responsibility for the care of heritage objects. It supports those who play a key role in the heritage infrastructure of Ireland and are vital to the delivery of national policy and plans. The partnership between Clare County Council and Dúchas na Sionna is a key step in safeguarding the heritage of Hastings Farmhouse. This project will look to put in place key structures and frameworks which will guide the future development of this protected structure and to determine a cost plan for proposals developed. A primary goal of this project is to increase accessibility to the site, and works will be undertaken to allow better access for all members of our community. The project initiated in May 2022, and will be completed by the end of the year.



DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT - PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The table below summarises the activity in relation to planning applications during the month of May up to and including May 27th and also gives the year to date totals.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS	May 2022 up to & including 27/05/2022	Year to date 2022
No. of planning applications received	81	476
No. of Planning Decisions made	88	430
No. of decisions notified by An Bord Pleanála	4	16
No. of pre-planning enquiries received	14	88
No. of Section 5 applications	8	35
No. of Section 97 Exemption Cert applications (in respect of Part V of the Planning & Dev Act 2000)	6	22
Submissions received regarding Compliance	21	171

PLANNING ENFORCEMENT

The table below summarises the activity in relation to planning enforcement during May, together with the year to date totals.

PLANNING ENFORCEMENT	May 2022 (up to 30/5/22)	Year to date 2022
No. of new complaints received	15	76
No of Files Opened	12	43
No. of Warning Letters issued	24	62
No. of Enforcement Notices served	6	8
No. of Legal Cases initiated	1	1
No. of Enforcement files closed	5	26

TAKING IN CHARGE OF HOUSING ESTATES

Significant progress has been made in advancing remedial works on three developments in the county. The combined value of these contracts will exceed €1m and in addition to making a real positive difference to the residents of these developments, the awarding of these contracts will provide a major boost for the construction industry in the county.

Housing Estate	Status
Cappahard, Tulla Road, Ennis	The Special Liquidators on behalf of IBRC paid out a full settlement following the Council's claim on the bonds held for this development. The works were advertised on eTenders and the contract was awarded to PS Carmody Contractors Ltd on 25th May. Works are due to start in early June and all residents will receive a leaflet drop this week informing them of the works being undertaken.
Shanballa, Lahinch Road, Ennis	The works were advertised on eTenders and tenders have been received and are currently being reviewed. It is expected that the tender will be awarded during June with works expected to commence in late June/early July.
Maigh Dara Estate, Quin	These works have been advertised on Etenders and tenders are due to be returned by 9th June. It is expected that this contract will be awarded in early July.

HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY

Biodiversity Projects 2022

The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has approved National Biodiversity Action Plan funding to Clare County Council for the following projects:

- Invasive Alien Species Review and Education project to the amount of €12,750
- Clare Wetland Survey to the amount of €20,000 in 2022, 2023 & 2024
- Barn Owl Survey to the amount of €12,750
- IAS Quagga mussel survey to the amount of €3,371
- Burren Protected Species Survey to the amount of €3,000 in 2022, 2023 & 2024
- The Hare's Corner project to the amount of €4,250 in 2022, 2023 & 2024.

The Clare Barn Owl survey

The Clare Barn Owl survey, which is being undertaken by BirdWatch Ireland in partnership with Clare County Council and supported by the Local Biodiversity Action Fund through the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, aims to establish how Barn Owls are currently faring in the county. The findings of the survey will be used to ensure the protection of nest sites and to direct targeted conservation efforts. This will include the provision of nest boxes, which BirdWatch Ireland will install in suitable locations throughout the county.



A Barn Owl visiting a nest with prey. © Richard T Mills

Wildlife in Buildings Video and Publication

Clare along with Tipperary and Laois County Councils hosted a webinar on Wildlife in Buildings during Biodiversity Week. This was to promote the Wildlife in Buildings video produced by Birdwatch Ireland with support from the three Local Authorities. In addition to this a publication of the same name is available. The video is available to view on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5lQt3C8u15E&t=1> and the booklet on Wildlife in Buildings is available at: <http://docstore.kerrycoco.ie/KCCWebsite/heritage/wildlifebuildings.pdf>

American skunk cabbage survey, *Lysichiton americanus*

Clare County Council commissioned a short survey of American skunk cabbage (*Lysichiton americanus*) on the River Blackwater, to determine its density and distribution. This project was carried out as part of Clare Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2023 to further action on Invasive Alien Species in the National Biodiversity Action Plan. The American skunk cabbage, *Lysichiton americanus* is an invasive alien plant introduced to Ireland through the ornamental trade and is listed in Europe as a species of union concern (European Commission 2014). This perennial herbaceous plant grows in wet habitats. It emerges in early spring (February-March) producing a large lantern like flower as an adult plant. Subsequently large leaves emerge from a fleshy rhizome and grow to about 1.5m in height. The large leaves shade and outcompete native plants and often form dense stands eliminating native plants under and in close proximity to a stand. Waterways Ireland are following up on this survey to eliminate the remaining stands on the Blackwater River and the Errina Canal, with the removal of the flowers and downstream remaining populations and will trial plastic cover for areas with high density of seedlings.



American skunk cabbage (*Lysichiton americanus*) on the River Blackwater, Co. Clare.

Irelands World Heritage Sites Tentative List for the Burren and Inis Cealtra

Throughout the month of May the Planning Department have engaged in a series of meetings with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage following the application by Clare County Council for the Burren and Inis Cealtra to be placed on Ireland's World Heritage Sites Tentative List. Announcements on the outcome of this process will be made by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in June.

Clare Community Archaeologist service

In May a contractor was engaged by the Planning Authority as a Clare Community Archaeologist and this service is now available to Clare County Council.

Clare/Irish Community Archive Network

The Clare section of the Irish Community Archive Network iCAN is a portal for community heritage and an archival network in County Clare. Clarecastle, Shannon, Kilkee and Scattery Island Heritage Groups along with the Clare Heritage Officer and the Reading Your Local Landscape projects have benefited greatly

from having been part of Irish Community Archive Network iCAN. There is now an opportunity for more communities in Clare to join this network and the Planning Department are seeking interest from Clare community groups (up to 6 groups) who have the interest and capacity to become involved. Details can be viewed on <https://clareheritage.org/>.

Survey and audit of cillíní sites or unbaptised children's burial grounds

In May, the survey and audit of cillíní sites or unbaptised children's burial grounds in County Clare progressed with 24 of the 70 cillíní sites surveyed. There are 140 known sites in County Clare and it is intended that these would all be surveyed by year end 2023.

Heritage Council Community Heritage Grants 2022

County Clare heritage groups benefited from the Heritage Council Community Heritage Grants 2022 to conserve and restore built, cultural and natural heritage throughout the county. Funding for 12 Clare communities was announced to the tune of €120,621. Awards range from €2,000 to €20,000 per project.

LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE

- **The Enhanced Trading Online Voucher Scheme**, which provides grant support to small businesses to develop an ecommerce website, has continued to see strong interest. So far in 2022, twenty-three applications have been approved, five in May, while in May a further three grants were drawn down totalling €5,925.00.
- **Mentoring:** LEO Clare continue to receive a strong requirement for all of our Mentoring Options including mentoring in Starting a Business, Finance, Digital Marketing, Export Development and Brexit. In May, 17 mentoring applications have been assigned.
- **Training:** LEO Clare continued to see strong demand for online training support offering during May with eleven courses and workshops taking place. The main topics of interest to Clare enterprises were Start Your Own Business Workshops, Breaking into the USA Export workshop, Women in Business Networking Event and continued completion of long running programmes with over 140 clients booked on.

Supported by Local Enterprise Office Clare, the students won second prize in the Junior category. The winning students were: Bríd-Áine Rouine, Áine Hennigan and Eimear Lernihan all thirteen years old, who worked under the guidance of their teacher, Caitríona Hynes. Their student enterprise was called: BEA Body Scrubs'.



National Award for Clare Students at Enterprise Finals

Students from Scoil Mhuire Ennistymon in Clare have taken Second prize in the Junior Category at this year's Student Enterprise Programme National Finals. The Finals of the Local Enterprise Office initiative were held physically for the first time in three years at the Helix in Dublin with An Tánaiste Leo Varadkar and host RTE's Rick O'Shea, with students and teachers in attendance from all over the country.

Several Clare Businesses products were featured on the RTÉ Today Show during the month of May (May 18th) as the show took place in Bunratty Castle. Businesses included: Carrygerry Country House, Hurst Botanicals, Wild Irish Seaweed and Sourdo'Farrell, along with the Burren GEOfood producers – Burren Gold Cheese, Burren Free Range Pork, Flaggy Shore Oysters, Burren Smokehouse Oysters, St Tola's Goat Cheese, Beetroot Chutney by Burren Fine Wine and Food, Premium Beef, Linnalla Ice cream and Wild Kitchen Haw Ketchup and Elderflower Champagne.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT



Pictured in the refurbished Tourist Office is John Rattigan, Museum Curator, welcoming back Carmel and Maria, staff of Fáilte Ireland.

Upgrade of County Museum

I am delighted to report that the fit out of the Ennis Tourist office is now completed by Fáilte Ireland and the added benefit to the visitors to Ennis is already visible. The space is now modern and bright and the two Fáilte Ireland staff have returned to the office. The refurbished space allows improved visitor movement between the County Museum and the tourist office and is much better for visitor engagement.

Preparatory work is underway for the re-location of DeValera's car to the County Museum and it is hoped to have this completed in June.

Schools Capital Projects

Under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Education, local authorities acquire sites for some new school development projects. In Kilrush, the Council acquired a site on the Back Road in recent years for Gaelscoil Uí Choimín. A meeting was held with Department of Education and Limerick Clare Education and Training Board in May to advance this to the design stage. Clare County Council is working to prepare a masterplan for the overall site to include the school portion of the site and the remainder of the site.

Property Transactions

The Table below shows the number of property transactions completed by Property Management Unit in May, together with the totals for 2022 to date.

We continue to assist many solicitors with enquiries to the Property Management Unit on issues associated with title, boundaries, old leasehold folios etc which is indicative of increasing of levels of activity in the property market in the County generally.

Transaction	May 2022	Year to date 2022	Full year 2021
Lease / Sub Lease of Property / Building	0	2	4
Licence to use property / building	1	6	11
Grazing Agreement for Lands	2	19	22
Deed of Transfer signed	1	8	12
Contract for Sale signed		0	0
Deed of Right of Way / Wayleave signed	0	5	3

Deed of Rectification / Variation signed	1	2	7
Allotment Agreements signed	0	38	39

Casual Trading

Three licences were issued during May for the Kilrush Horse Fair which takes place on Thursday, 2nd June. After two years of no activity, this should bring a good bit of activity to the areas.

Derelict Sites

Activity in 2022 to date has focused on continued engagement with owners or derelict properties to encourage them to do works or bring the property to market. We have seen a number of such properties coming to market, some by auction and also a number of sales agreed. Once a derelict property is sold, we commence engagement with the new owners, up to and including service of the notices under the Derelict Sites Act, 1990.

We are also seeing the outcome of sales agreed in late 2021 and early 2022 with enquiries, planning applications for refurbishment and commencement of works to render properties non-derelict. This is not to say that there are not many challenges in dealing with derelict sites as we come across many issues which need to be resolved. However, with time and effort, working with owners, financial institutions and other departments, there are definitely options for positive re-development and revitalisation of many such derelict sites.

The CPO process is underway on 4 properties and to date three of these have been lodged in the Property Registration Authority. We are about to commence the CPO process on

another property in Cratloe, which will be publicly advertised and submissions sought from those with an interest in the property.

The table below provides a snapshot of the activity in May and 2022 to date, together with comparative figures for the full year 2021.

Derelict Sites	May 2022	Year to date 2022	Full year 2021
No. of new files opened	1	28	35
No. of Section 8(2) Notices issued - Intention to enter site on Derelict Sites Register	0	15	20
No. of Section 8(7) Notices issued - Entry of site onto Derelict Sites Register	1	12	4
No. of Section 11 Notices issued - Measures required to render the site non-derelict	0	0	2
No. of files closed / property removed from Derelict Sites Register	7	13	0
No. of Notices served to Compulsorily Purchase (CPO)	1	5	0
No of Vesting Orders signed	0	4	0

SHANNON MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Ongoing works

The Footpath contractor for the Municipal District is finishing a small number of snagging items at various locations while the grass cutting contract has continued with the fifth cut currently under way. Our Surface Dressing programme from the Schedule of Municipal District for 2022 Works has been completed while our own crews have continued the ground preparation for the 2022 overlay programme.



Pictured: Mike Meehan and Hugh Ward from the team in Shannon Municipal District delivering a new footpath in Shannon Banks during May and surface dressing in Meelick.

Shannon Municipal District Meeting

The May meeting of the Shannon Municipal District was hosted by the Shannon College of Hotel Management. The Municipal District and its members are keen to develop working relationships across the area and were delighted to reach out to and be received by the Shannon College with its global reputation and local contribution to County Clare and the Mid-West.



Dr Phillip J Smyth, Head of College, and his team welcomed the Cathaoirleach of the MD, Cllr John Crowe, Cathaoirleach of Clare County Council, Cllr PJ Ryan, and the other members as well as Director of Service, Liam Conneally and the Shannon MD Team. Dr Smyth gave a presentation on the Shannon College and outlined the aspirations for the College as the first item on the agenda for this bi-monthly meeting.

At this meeting the 'Shannon MD Small Community Grants' scheme was also adopted by Councillor and thirty three community groups across the MD will receive in support from this year's fund of €24,000.

Town and Village, Outdoor Recreation, Active Travel

At the recent meeting of the Shannon Municipal District, the Section 38 for Road Improvement works at School Road / Kilquane Drive, Parteen, was adopted as part of the on-going Town and Village Renewal Scheme for Parteen. The tender for the works has been awarded and the letter of intent has issued. Consultation with landowners is ongoing.

The ORIS (Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Measures) project on the trail to the rear of Drumgeely, Shannon, which links the embankment loop walk to the N19 /Shannon Free Zone walkway, commenced during the month. It is anticipated that the upgraded works will encourage walkers/cyclists/runners to make more use of the amenity along the embankments. Shannon MD are in regular contact with Shannon Commercial Properties to identify synergies and projects of mutual benefit.

The Meelick Active Travel project to develop a footpath along the northern edge of the road is continuing with ongoing engagement with landowners.

Building Damage

During the month of May an accident resulted in a car damaging the area to the front of the Shannon MD Town Hall building. Fortunately, there were no injuries and the team responded quickly to ensure their own safety as well as that of the public. An Garda Siochána from Shannon were on the scene within minutes to assist. There was disruption to our front counter services for a week but back office services continued and works to restore safe access to our building were carried out with haste. Services were restored within 6 working days.

Greenways

Shannon Municipal District participated in a public consultation session in Clonlara community centre during the month as part of the proposed development of a greenway from Limerick to Lough Derg. There was significant interest in the project on the night with local councillors also in attendance.



Pictured: Historic Bridge and Walkway on the O'Garney River.

The Team in Shannon MD met with the Project Management Office (PMO) of Clare County Council and consultants to consider options for the development of routeways between Shannon Town, Bunratty and Sixmilebridge. A site visit was arranged to consider the landscape, ecology, built heritage, route options and constraints.